UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

MONITORING OF HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES/COLOMBIA

LARGE-GROUP INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT AND CONFINEMENTS

(January to june 2024)

KEY FIGURES

144[1] Events

85 Large-group internal displacement[2]
- **35,153** Persons
- **14,905** Families
- **34%** Women*
- **33%** Men*
- **33%** Children and adolescents*

59 Confinements[3]
- **59,373** Persons
- **17,175** Families
- **36%** Women*
- **41%** Men*
- **23%** Children and adolescents*

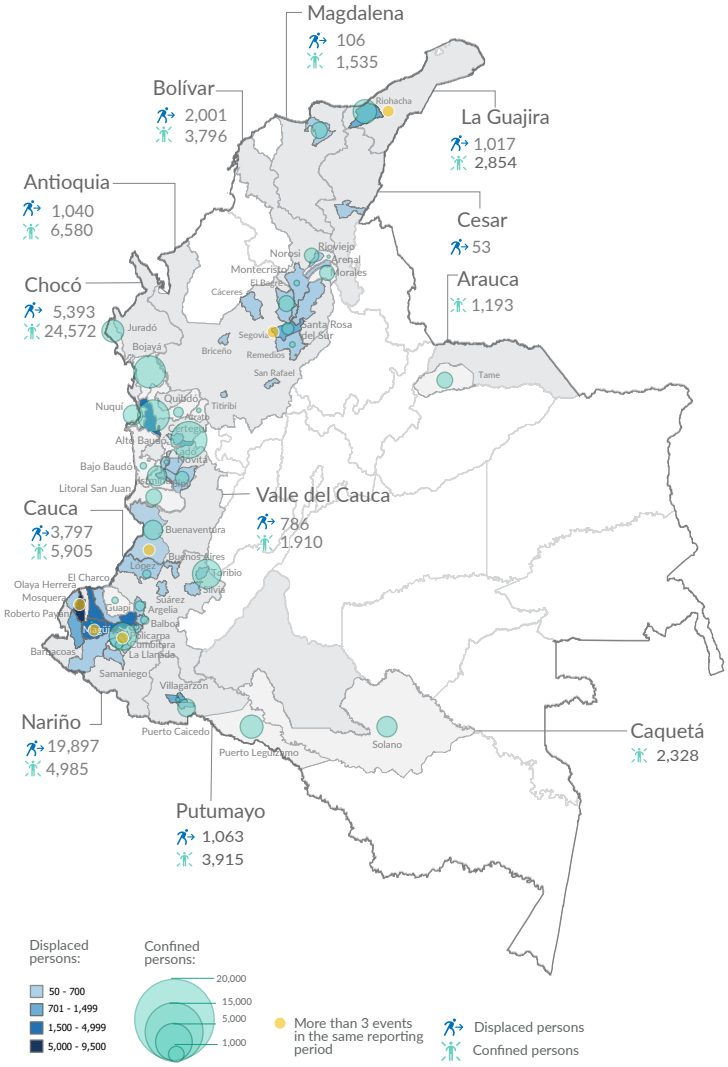
*The response rate for the gender and age disaggregation question was 33% of the total number of large-group internal displacement events recorded in UNHCR's monitoring.

From January to June 2024, UNHCR has confirmed 85 large-scale displacement events, affecting 35,153 individuals (14,905 families). These emergencies primarily impacted rural communities in the departments of Nariño, Chocó, Cauca, Bolívar, and Antioquia, accounting for nearly 94% of the total individuals affected by forced displacement nationwide. This represents a 14% increase in events and a 4% rise in affected individuals compared to the same period in 2023.

While a slight downward trend in events is emerging during the second quarter, the worsening humanitarian situation in the departments of Magdalena, Cesar, and La Guajira is particularly concerning. These areas are experiencing significant impacts due to territorial control disputes between Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs) in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta region, leading to displacements, confinements, and other severe consequences for communities.

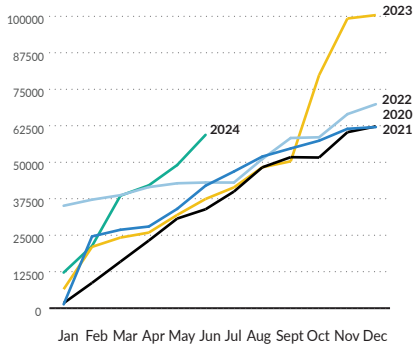
During the reporting period, 59 confinement events affecting 59,373 individuals (17,175 families) have also been confirmed. Compared to the first semester of 2023, these figures represent an over 58% increase in the number of affected individuals and a 73% rise in reported events. Chocó continues to experience the highest number of confinements (25 events – 24,572 individuals), followed by Antioquia (5 events – 6,580 individuals), Cauca (5 events – 5,905 individuals), Nariño (5 events – 4,985 individuals), and Bolívar (5 events – 3,796 individuals). The second quarter saw a notable rise in individuals affected by confinements in Antioquia, Bolívar, and Cauca.

New confinements were also reported in Magdalena and Caquetá, attributed to territorial disputes between NSAGs, direct threats, and intimidation of the population. Notably, in May, Caquetá experienced its first large-scale event of the year, affecting approximately 2,300 individuals in Solano municipality,

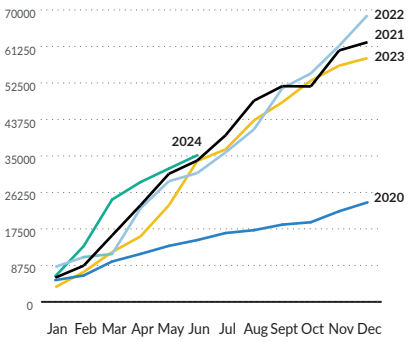


EMERGENCIES OVER TIME

Number of people confined (2020-2024)



Number of people displaced in large-group displacement events (2020-2024)



> "Compared to the first semester of 2023, these figures represent an over 58% increase in the number of affected individuals and a 73% rise in reported events. Chocó continues to experience the highest number of confinements (25 events – 24,572 individuals) (...)"

[1] Emergency events are constantly being verified and validated; therefore figures are subject to change.
[2] The confinements and large-group internal displacement in the infographic and monitored by UNHCR correspond only to the departments in the areas covered by the field offices.
[3] Confinement is understood as a situation of violation of rights in which a community loses mobility as a result of the actions of Non-State Armed Groups, thus preventing access to goods essential for survival.

Note: This document was produced with the support of the European Commission's Directorate General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

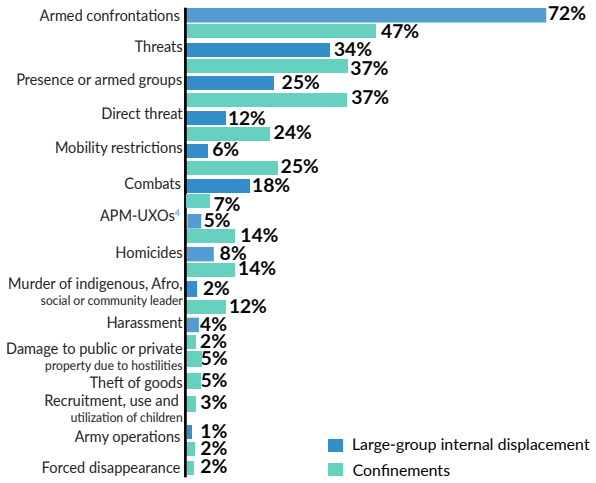
Data cut-off: June 2024 Source: UNHCR Contact: colboim@unhcr.org

primarily from the Koreguaje Indigenous community, due to intensified clashes between NSAGs in the border area with Putumayo.

However, there has been a recent rise in affected individuals who do not identify as belonging to Indigenous or Afro-Colombian populations, as observed in departments like Bolívar, Arauca, Putumayo, Antioquia, Cauca, and Caquetá, where approximately 23,000 such individuals have been impacted.

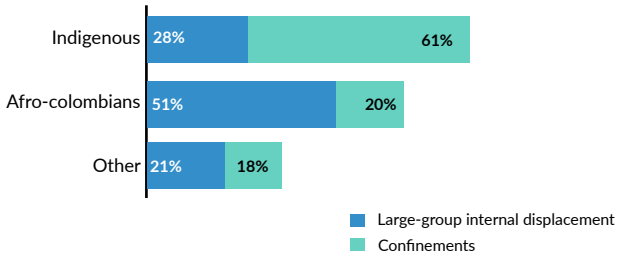
CAUSES OF EMERGENCIES*

Clashes between Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs) remain the primary cause of 72% of the displacement events reported in the first semester and 47% of confinements. Other significant causes of displacement include widespread threats, the presence of NSAGs, and armed confrontations. For confinements, mobility restrictions accounted for 25% of the cases.



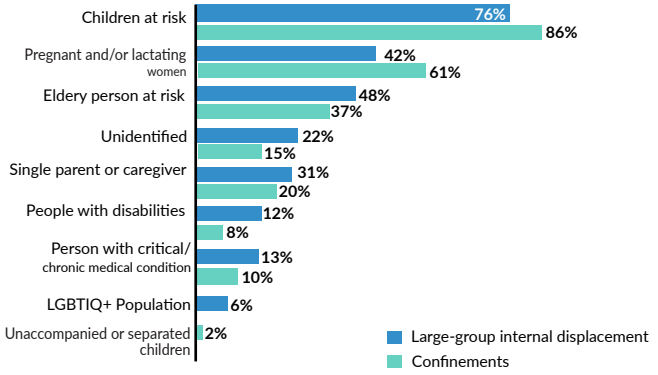
ETHNICITY

According to UNHCR monitoring, nearly 81% of individuals affected by confinement during the first semester of 2024 live in rural areas of the Colombian Pacific. This has disproportionately impacted Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities.

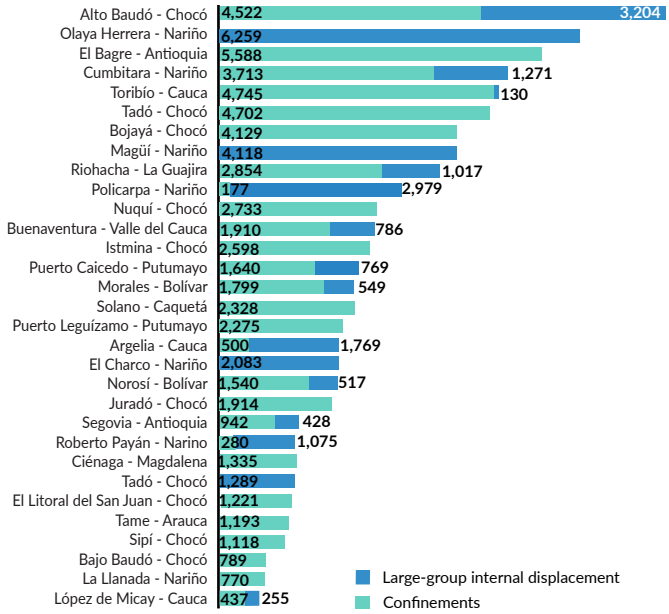


PROTECTION PROFILES IDENTIFIED

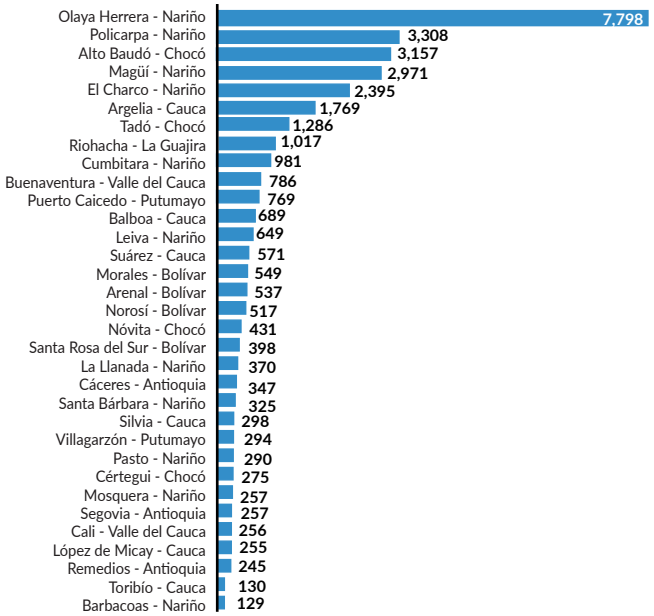
The most vulnerable groups affected by both displacement and confinement include children and adolescents (76% and 86%, respectively), followed by pregnant and/or lactating women (42% for displacement and 61% for confinement). Older adults (60 years or older) represented 48% of those affected by displacement.



TOP 30 | PEOPLE AFFECTED BY EMERGENCIES BY MUNICIPALITY



TOP 30 | MUNICIPALITIES RECEIVING DISPLACED POPULATION



[4] Contamination by anti-personnel mines and unexploded ordnance (AP-UXOs).
*Percentages add up to more than 100% because the same displacement event can have more than one cause.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

CAUCA

VICTIMS BY MUNICIPALITY

	Displaced persons	Confined persons
Argelia	1,769	500
Balboa	689	90
Suárez	571	
Silvia	298	
López de Micay	255	437
Toribío	130	4,742
Buenos Aires	85	
Guapi		133

The humanitarian situation in Cauca has worsened significantly in the first semester, particularly due to the presence of NSAGs and territorial control disputes. According to UNHCR monitoring, at least 23 displacement and confinement events have affected approximately 8,000 individuals in municipalities such as Suárez, Silvia, López de Micay, Toribío, Buenos Aires, Guapi, Balboa, and Argelia. The rural area of Argelia continues to be a hotspot for armed confrontations, leading to seven large-scale displacements in the first semester.

Compared to the same period in 2023, there has been a more than 100% increase in emergencies related to displacement and confinement, with the majority occurring between April and June. This increase coincides with the lifting of the bilateral ceasefire between NSAGs and the Government. Additionally, there has been a rise in mobility restrictions, terrorist attacks, the use of unconventional weapons by NSAGs, and the recruitment, use, and exploitation of children and adolescents. According to the Ombudsperson´s Office, over 170 cases of child recruitment, use, and exploitation were reported in the first semester of 2024.

Three structural early warnings were issued by the Ombudsperson for Cauca: Alert 013-24 for Argelia, Alert 015-24 for Páez, and Alert 019-24 for Caloto, Corinto, Jambaló, Miranda, and Toribío. These alerts highlighted risks such as generalized threats, armed confrontations, child recruitment, and the incursion of new NSAG fronts into vulnerable territories.

ARAUCA

VICTIMS BY MUNICIPALITY

	Confined persons
Tame	1,192

Since March, the humanitarian situation in Arauca has deteriorated further. In April, the year's first confinement event was recorded in Tame municipality, affecting over 1,180 individuals from the U'wa Indigenous community due to escalated clashes between NSAGs vying for territorial control.

Increased risks were also identified in Puerto Rondón and Arauquita municipalities, where confinement events occurred in 2023. The Ombudsperson's Early Warning 011-23 for Arauca (covering Arauca, Arauquita, Fortul, Saravena, and Tame) highlights risks stemming from confrontations between the ELN (National Liberation Army) and dissident factions of the former FARC, seeking to dominate the territory. Although no large-scale events were recorded in the first quarter, individual displacements and victimization incidents have increased, as noted in the National Registry of Victims (RUV).

PUTUMAYO

VICTIMS BY MUNICIPALITY

	Displaced persons	Confined persons
Puerto Caicedo	769	1,640
Villagarzón	294	
Puerto Leguizamo		2,275

Persistent clashes between NSAGs in Putumayo continue to threaten and harm civilians. UNHCR recorded large-scale displacements in Villagarzón and Puerto Caicedo municipalities, affecting over 1,000 individuals. Confinements were also reported in Puerto Leguízamo and Puerto Caicedo, impacting more than 3,900 individuals.

The primary causes of these confinements include widespread threats, direct intimidation, armed confrontations, and homicides. Humanitarian access restrictions have hindered the proper registration and timely assistance of affected communities. The situation is further aggravated by underreporting, as NSAGs pressure civilians not to report incidents to authorities. A significant proportion of displacements in Putumayo are individual cases, with many victims seeking refuge in Caquetá.