

# Ecuador

Operational Update  
**2025 in review**

## Figures at a glance

### Population figures

**80,807** 94%

Historical figure of refugees  
recognized by Ecuador<sup>1</sup>

from neighbouring  
Colombia

**67,833**

refugees with active cases  
registered on UNHCR's database



 **73.3M**  
required in 2024

- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

For more information on funding, please visit:  
[reporting.unhcr.org/ecuador](http://reporting.unhcr.org/ecuador)

### Our 2025 response in figures

**55,873\***

refugees and other displaced  
people supported and  
registered in proGres as of the  
end of October 2025

 **786**

people supported  
with childprotection  
services

 **7,059**

people supported with  
community - based  
protection services

 **14,514**

people supported with  
mental health and  
psychosocial support

 **6,818**

people received  
hygiene kits

 **37,669**

people received  
orientation and  
assistance to access  
asylum services

 **12,271**

people supported with  
collective emergency  
shelter

 **4,858**

women and girls  
survivors of violence  
supported

 **9,658**

people assisted to  
cover their basic  
needs and protection

 **481**

people provided  
with technicalor  
skills certification

 **1,664**

people linked with a  
decent employment  
opportunity

**“Always keep faith and hope, keep  
that desire to move forward, that  
drive to make things happen”**

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## Operational context

Ecuador's displacement situation in 2025 continued to evolve under the combined impact of regional policy changes, escalating violence in Colombia, and growing insecurity inside the country. Armed violence linked to the conflict in Colombia sustained cross-border movements, with 3,471 new displacements recorded. While overall Colombian movements declined compared to 2024, the figures still reflect a worrying trend driven by armed conflict. Venezuelan arrivals reached 236,982 entries annually (19,748 monthly average), with 217,153 exits annually (18,096 monthly average) leaving a 1,652 monthly positive migratory balance, indicating more entries than departures. At the same time, many displaced people, particularly Venezuelans, remained in an irregular status due to limited access to documentation, lack of information, and the inability to cover processing costs. The cancellation of the extraordinary regularization process left many in legal limbo and restricted access to basic services and local integration opportunities.

Displacement affecting Ecuadorians also increased. In 2025, over 100,000 Ecuadorians held pending asylum applications abroad, reflecting outward displacement linked to insecurity. Internal displacement expanded significantly, with a nationwide study by the Ombudsman's Office and UNHCR identifying 313,228 people internally displaced by violence, affecting approximately 156,614 households.

Despite these pressures, Ecuador maintained a visible role in international cooperation. In 2025, the country presided over UNHCR's Executive Committee and, with UNHCR support, continued to engage in the Quito Process assuming the Pro Tempore Presidency during the year. In parallel, Ecuador and the United States finalized an agreement allowing asylum seekers in the United States to be transferred to Ecuador to seek asylum and integrate, with procedures jointly developed to ensure safe, dignified and timely transfers in line with international standards.

At the same time, reforms to the Human Mobility Law were enacted to strengthen migration controls and expedite deportation and protection-related procedures. UNHCR provided technical inputs to ensure alignment with international standards.

The broader political and security context added pressure. General elections held in two rounds resulted in the re-election of President Daniel Noboa.

In September, nationwide protests triggered by the cancellation of diesel subsidies escalated into a violent national strike. In November, a constitutional referendum addressing issues including foreign military cooperation and political financing was held, with voters rejecting all proposals.

By the end of 2025, Ecuador recorded its most violent year on record, placing the country with the highest homicide rate in Latin America, recording 52 per 100,000 inhabitants. This level of violence continues to undermine protection, social cohesion and the socioeconomic integration of displaced populations and host communities increasing risks of violence against women, recruitment and extorsion.

Environmental shocks further compounded humanitarian needs. Heavy rains affected over 100,000 people nationwide, while Esmeraldas Province experienced flooding that damaged the main water treatment plant and—combined with an oil spill and a subsequent earthquake—disrupted services and livelihoods for nearly 300,000 people. In Napo and Sucumbíos, landslides and road disruptions limited connectivity for rural communities hosting refugees and reduced access to asylum and basic services. Humanitarian actors, including UNHCR, coordinated responses through the Emergency Operations Committee (COE), advocating for the inclusion of refugees and migrants amid constrained funding.

At the same time, global funding cuts severely reduced UNHCR's operational capacity in Ecuador, leading to the closure of four field offices and staff reductions across protection and asylum services, weakening referral mechanisms, limiting economic inclusion and increasing reliance on negative coping strategies such as labor exploitation, survival sex and onward movements, while placing additional strain on host communities and local services.

Within this context, UNHCR's 2026–2029 strategy provides the framework to sustain protection and advance solutions under constrained and unpredictable funding, prioritizing access to asylum, strengthened legal and physical protection, community engagement and durable solutions. Without sustained international support, continued funding shortfalls, risk weakening protection systems, slowing integration efforts, and leaving displaced people and host communities exposed to harm that could be prevented.

## Main populations forced to flee hosted by Ecuador and others of concern

### Colombians

According to government data, 175 Colombians sought asylum in Ecuador in December 2025 (3,471 so far in the year), a 28% decrease compared to the previous month. The total number of asylum seekers from Colombia accounts for 50% of those registered in 2024. 67% of people registered this month arrived in the country in families of two or more. The reduction of asylum seekers registered does not necessarily mean fewer people entering the country. Funding cuts led to office closures and disrupted work with partners, reducing our ability to register, identify and refer people to the asylum procedure, which in turn lowered the number of cases identified. Even so, asylum applications have generally increased over the past decade, with 2024 marking the highest peak due to the worsening conditions in the country of origin, including with constant internal displacements and confinements in departments at the border with Ecuador.

**3,471** Colombians who have sought asylum in Ecuador in 2025  
**175** were registered in December

**Main needs of Colombians in Ecuador**  
**92%** access to housing  
**50%** access to basic services  
**31%** access to employment

## Venezuelans

Venezuelans continue to lead in numbers of arrivals in Ecuador, 19,554 people entered the country in December 2025 (9,0 % more than the previous month), with a daily entry average of 652 Venezuelans. 18,162 people left the country, a 10% decrease as compared to the previous month, leaving a balance of 1,392 people who entered and remained in the country during the reporting period (4.5% less than the previous month).

According to government data, 383 Venezuelans sought asylum in Ecuador in December 2025 (5,865 so far this year), a 16% decrease compared to the previous month. The current number of Venezuelan asylum seekers registered this year is almost the same as the total registered in 2024. Since 2022, Venezuela has accounted for approximately 45–50% of the asylum claims processed in Ecuador. This highlights both the continued need for support and the sustained interest in accessing international protection. Moreover, with the conclusion of the second phase of the regularization process, the asylum system has become increasingly relevant for those with protection needs.

Population entry and exit figures have been compiled by the GTRMs in Ecuador's border areas (Tulcán, Lago Agrio, and Huaquillas) with qualitative and quantitative information on mixed movement trends. These figures are not triangulated with neighboring countries.

**440,450** Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Ecuador<sup>2</sup>

**45%** estimated to be between 18 and 45 years old

**25%** estimated to have a higher education degree

### Main needs<sup>3</sup>

**55%** access to food

**67%** access to housing or shelter

**53%** access to livelihoods or employment

## Ecuadorians

Trends in Ecuadorian displacements have shifted, with this nationality dropping to the fifth to cross the Darien Jungle, according to Panamanian authorities. These numbers have decreased dramatically compared to the same period in previous years. 108,000 Ecuadorian asylum-seekers globally were pending a decision on their claims by mid- 2024. The Ombudspersons Office, with support from UNHCR and ECHO, launched a report on internal displacement which estimates that over 315,000 Ecuadorians had been internally displaced between 2022 and 2024.

See the [executive summary here](#).



## SPECIAL FOCUS: Sport for Protection

In 2025, UNHCR Ecuador continued to place sport at the centre of its community-based protection and inclusion strategy, recognizing its power to restore dignity, rebuild social ties and create safe spaces for people forced to flee. Displacement often means starting over after losing home, work and support networks, while facing barriers to rights, discrimination, and isolation. Through sport, UNHCR has found a practical and human way to respond to these challenges as being part of a team allows displaced people to be recognized not by their nationality, but by who they are.

But this approach has gone beyond participation. Sports activities have become key entry points to identify protection risks, strengthen community bonds and activate referral pathways for cases such as violence, school dropout or discrimination, in coordination with ministries, municipalities and local organizations.

At both national and global levels, partnerships—including collaboration with LIV Golf—have reinforced UNHCR's sport-for-protection methodology, demonstrating that sport is not only about play: it protects, connects and helps rebuild lives, while inviting more actors to join a collective effort that places dignity and community at its core.



## Key activities in sport for protection

### NATIONAL

#### Allies for a world of possibilities in sport

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and 17 professional, local, and community sports organizations and teams, as well as high-performance athletes and content creators, launched the coalition "Allies for a Possible World in Sport," a group that aims to promote sport as a tool for protection and integration in communities and foster integration and empathy for people forced to flee their homes. This effort is possible thanks to the support from LIV Golf.

[Read more here.](#)



2. According to data estimated by the Refugee and Migrant Working Group (GTRM, by its acronym in Spanish).

3. Fifth R4V Joint Needs Assessment. [www.r4v.info](http://www.r4v.info)



## Where sports and community well-being Meet

Together with Universidad de los Hemisferios, UNHCR joined the Sports Coalition. As part of this initiative, and in partnership with FUDELA, a community event was held combining sports activities with a medical brigade. More than 100 community members in Quito received orthodontic and general medical check-ups and took part in sports activities, including golf. This event was made possible thanks to the support of UNHCR's private sector donor, LIV Golf.



## Promoting women's well-being through sport

In partnership with the Ministry of Sport, UNHCR accompanied 150 refugee women in Manabí, Santo Domingo and Esmeraldas through the Heart of a Champion workshop. This safe and empowering space combined sport and self-care to strengthen confidence, well-being and leadership. As part of the Activate initiative, the workshop promoted physical and emotional health while fostering resilience and community integration. UNHCR continues to advance inclusive programmes that facilitate refugee women's access to basic services and personal development, with the support of LIV Golf.



## Building community through sport, art and play

In Mataje, UNHCR organized a sports-based integration day at the local school, creating a safe and joyful space for children to learn and play. In San Lorenzo, UNHCR and partner FEPP continued regular integration activities for 200 children and adolescents, using sport to strengthen communication, leadership and emotional well-being among displaced and host community youth, while 22 community leaders and coaches were trained to sustain these approaches. In addition, UNHCR and FEPP, together with GIZ, Aldeas Infantiles, the Ministry of Education and local child-protection actors, did a three-day youth gathering combining music, art, traditional games and peer dialogue to strengthen inclusion and a shared sense of community. These activities were made possible thanks to the support of LIV Golf.



## Golf-for-Protection and community youth leadership

Throughout 2025 in Guayaquil, CDH used community sport as a tool for protection and inclusion, supporting children and adolescents in Orquídeas and Isla Trinitaria through football, cultural activities and youth-led initiatives. A key milestone was the introduction of Golf-for-Protection, now regularly integrated into community sports sessions, offering young people a new space to build confidence and teamwork. Other youth-led initiatives, including Entre Panas, Filma tu Calle and the Youth Leadership School, further consolidated these efforts by amplifying youth voices and strengthening their role in community protection and leadership.



## DELIVERING PROTECTION



## Mobile Brigades: Bringing protection closer to people forced to flee

Throughout 2025, UNHCR implemented mobile documentation and asylum brigades, bringing protection services closer to people forced to flee. In total, eight mobile brigades were carried out in Lago Agrio, Machala and San Lorenzo, reaching more than 3,800 people. Additionally, in Montúfar and Carchi, documentation guidance and a humanitarian mission with NRC enabled 40 forcibly displaced people to access specialized support at border areas. This integrated response was made in coordination with the Public Defender's Office, the Civil Registry, NRC and local partners made possible by the support of the Government of Japan and ECHO.



## 📍 GUAYAQUIL

### Women leading change

UNHCR, together with CDH Guayaquil and the Cantonal Council for the Protection of Rights, began developing the Work Plan for the Guayaquil Women's Advisory Council. 50 women participated in consultations and dialogue sessions to identify key actions addressing the risks and challenges they face. This participatory process strengthens local leadership and promotes inclusive decision-making to advance the rights and protection of women, including refugees and migrants. UNHCR remains committed to supporting spaces where women's voices shape solutions and drive change. This was done with support from our donors from both the public and private sector.



## 📍 QUITO

### Community-led dialogue maps for safer neighbourhoods

Lead by UNHCR, forcibly displaced women in the neighborhood of Solanda identified safe and unsafe community spaces through participatory discussions, culminating in a localized action plan to enhance protection measures. The initiative centred on collective risk analysis and empowerment strategies, enabling participants to shape solutions addressing their specific security concerns. By prioritizing displaced voices in safety planning, the project strengthens grassroots advocacy and fosters inclusive environments where vulnerable groups can thrive.



## 📍 IBARRA

### Youth programmes to prevent recruitment

At the Casa de la Juventud in Ibarra, UNHCR and Fudela supported the implementation of cultural, sports and livelihoods activities that prevent violence and reduce risks of forced recruitment. Nearly 800 young people from 117 neighbourhoods participate in these initiatives, which foster community cohesion and provide safe, protective spaces for adolescents—including those affected by displacement. This was done thanks to the support of our donors supporting the efforts of UNHCR in communities.



## 📍 QUITO

### Weaving safer, more inclusive communities

In commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism and 25 November, UNHCR promoted community-based actions alongside State institutions, civil society, educational communities and women's networks across several provinces. Through training spaces, self-care and empowerment workshops, arts and education initiatives, community fairs, and public walks these efforts strengthened local capacities, support networks and community leadership to create awareness to prevent violence against girls and women. Together, they contributed to building safer, more inclusive and resilient communities, with a focus on women, children and adolescents.



## PROMOTING ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

## 📍 QUITO

### Casa Sin Fronteras a one-stop-shop for refugees and host communities

Together with the IDB, the Municipality of Quito and with support from the Government of Japan, UNHCR opened the Casa Sin Fronteras in Solanda, Quito. This new space provides integrated protection and inclusion services for people facing forced displacement and their host communities through a “one-stop” model offering psychological support, legal counselling, livelihoods orientation and employability workshops.



## Multisectoral action strengthens access to essential services for people forced to flee

In Ibarra, UNHCR supported a multisectoral intervention to strengthen access to essential services for people forced to flee and host communities. Upgrades and equipment were provided to community and municipal facilities, including bedding for Fundación Cristo de la Calle, equipment for the municipal dining hall benefiting around 300 daily users and equipment for the Rights Protection Board of Urcuquí, contributing to more efficient assistance for children and other priority groups. Also, via UNAIDS support, new furnishings and 100 hygiene kits were delivered for the Priorato Health Centre, reinforcing its operational capacity and strengthening HIV prevention efforts. These actions ensured dignified access to protection, nutrition and healthcare, reflecting the value of coordinated, multisectoral responses at the local level.



## MONTECRISTI

### Providing Essential Healthcare

UNHCR, in coordination with Juana la Avanzadora collective and the local Municipality, organized a medical assistance day providing basic healthcare services to forcibly displaced people and their hosts. In the temporary medical space, approximately 70 people—mostly women and children—received free medical attention. This effort supported vulnerable populations, helped to complement the local healthcare system, and demonstrated a humanitarian commitment to the right of every individual to live a healthy and dignified life. The Republic of Korea made this possible through their generous support.



## ESMERALDAS & SAN LORENZO

### Safe places for youth leadership and community protection

In Esmeraldas and San Lorenzo, UNHCR supported the rehabilitation of municipal community spaces that promote youth participation, protection and access to services in areas with high levels of violence and recruitment. In Esmeraldas, the Casa de la Juventud was restored and reopened as a safe, functional centre for learning, workshops and activities that strengthen youth leadership and community engagement. In San Lorenzo, UNHCR, together with the GAD, upgraded the Digital Access Point and the Municipal Library, improving infrastructure, furniture, equipment and connectivity. The site now also serves as a legal protection and asylum support point, with trained staff and adapted areas ensuring safe access to services. These were made possible thanks to the support of the Government of Japan, reinforcing inclusive for young people and their families.



## PROMOTING SOCIOECONOMIC INCLUSION

## NATIONAL

### Inclusive business seal recognizes private-sector commitments in Ecuador

In Quito, UNHCR held the fourth edition of the Inclusive Business Seal, recognizing 86 companies for their efforts to promote labour inclusion of people who have experienced forced displacement and members of their host communities. The initiative strengthens public-private collaboration and opens pathways to decent work and sustainable livelihoods. This was done thanks to the support of donors like Japan, AECID, Embassy of Corea who support the efforts of the private sector in the inclusion of forcibly displaced people.



## Connecting talent with opportunities

In Manta, UNHCR implemented a set of livelihoods actions to promote labor inclusion for forcibly displaced people and host communities. Together with GIZ, NRC and HIAS, these efforts included the Connecting Talent with Opportunities job fair, where 21 companies offered 112 vacancies to more than 600 participants, advancing the socioeconomic inclusion of forcibly displaced populations. Additionally, through an agreement with Discovery and Innovation, 60 people certified their skills, while a partnership with Smart Consultant enabled an additional 35 refugees and migrants in Manta to obtain Ministry of Labour endorsed certification in areas such as recreation and sports, training of trainers, and automotive mechatronics. With support from the Embassies of the Republic of Korea and Japan, these initiatives strengthened sustainable livelihoods and demonstrated that inclusion is good for business.



## NATIONAL

### Socioeconomic integration opportunities for refugees

In November, UNHCR supported the completion of a new cohort of a dual training programme implemented in partnership Humboldt Zentrum, and certified by the German Chamber of Commerce, across several cities, including Quito, Manta, Portoviejo and Santo Domingo. A total of 33 participants completed a 340-hour training in the pharmaceutical sector, combining theoretical instruction with practical experience, and obtained formal certification after successfully passing the corresponding evaluations. Upon completion, Grupo DIFARE hired 24% of the apprentices, demonstrating the effectiveness of private-sector partnerships in facilitating access to formal employment and sustainable livelihoods for people forced to flee. These results were made possible thanks to the support of donors such as the Republic of Korea, which continues to support labour market integration initiatives for refugees and other displaced populations in Ecuador.



## PROMOTING PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

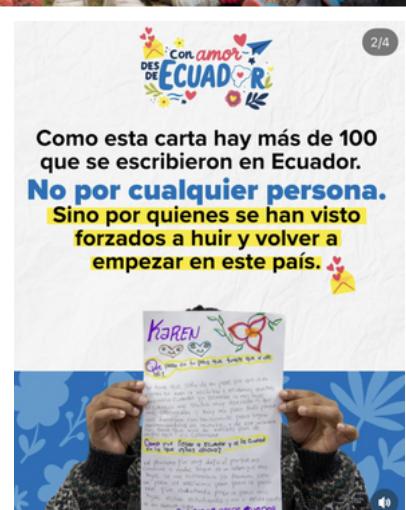
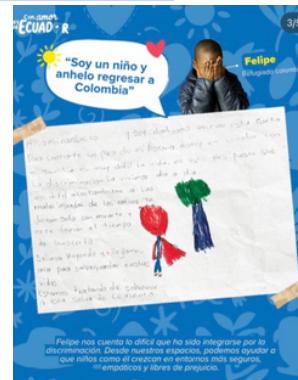
### WORLD REFUGEE DAY

To commemorate World Refugee Day 2025, UNHCR Ecuador led a series of high-impact activities across the country to show and strengthen solidarity with refugees and migrants.

#### "Con Amor desde Ecuador"

The central feature of this year's World Refugee Day was the launch of the initiative "Con Amor desde Ecuador", which raised the voices of forcibly displaced people across the country to share their stories. Refugees across Ecuador wrote heartfelt letters expressing their experiences of fleeing their countries, integrating, sharing their dreams, as well as showing appreciation to the institutions, communities, and individuals who have supported them throughout their journeys. UNHCR compiled these messages into a symbolic collection, distributing over 246 letters to high-level stakeholders including the Vice President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, mayors, key donors, journalists, content creators, private sector allies, and partners. The initiative was a powerful gesture of gratitude and a call for continued solidarity with the forcibly displaced people in Ecuador.

[See the video here.](#)



Como esta carta hay más de 100 que se escribieron en Ecuador.

**No por cualquier persona.**  
Sino por quienes se han visto  
forzados a huir y volver a  
empezar en este país.

2/4

## Sports features at the centre stage of protection and solutions

UNHCR, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Municipality of Quito hosted a national commemorative event that brought together government and Embassy representatives, private sector collaborators, refugee leaders, and humanitarian partners. The event combined a formal ceremony with traditional sports such as relay races, rugby, and local games—highlighting the strength, potential, and cultural richness of displaced communities while promoting social inclusion and cohesion.



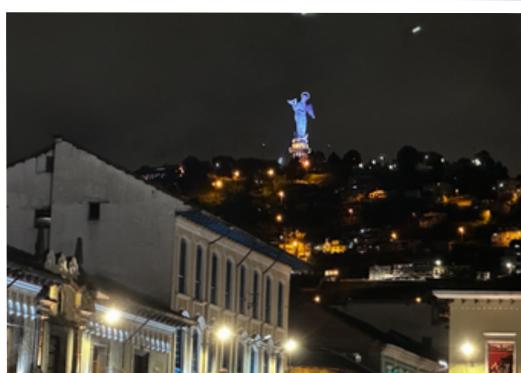
## Interview outlet

UNHCR Ecuador also engaged the national and international media to highlight displacement trends and protection challenges. Representative Federico Agusti gave more than six interviews to national and international outlets, including EFE. His opinion piece was published in *El Universo*. All of these press release contributed to extend the reach of World Refugee Day messages to broader audiences across the region and beyond.



## Bluenight in support of refugees

In a symbolic show of unity, support and solidarity, iconic landmarks across Ecuador were lit up in blue. Cities such as Quito, Lago Agrio, Manta, Cuenca, Tulcán, and Portoviejo participated in this nationwide activity, sending a message of hope and welcome to those seeking safety and dignity in the country.



## Regular activities in the field



### Students Stand with Refugees in fundraising campaign

UNHCR concluded this semester's collaboration with International Relations students from Universidad San Francisco de Quito. The initiative began in October with a class project in which students were tasked with designing a fundraising and awareness-raising initiative, including a concert, a soccer tournament, a solidarity raffle, an auction, and the sale of flowers in support of refugees. Beyond the donation amount collected, this initiative was about awareness-raising and fostering solidarity and encouraging students to understand the realities faced by displaced populations and to share that commitment within their own communities.



### Allies for a World of Possibilities: A Practical Guide for Inclusion

The Allies for a World of Possibilities Toolkit is a practical guide designed to help schools, communities and institutions create safe and inclusive spaces through activities on inclusion, non-discrimination and coexistence. Through this toolkit, UNHCR supported training and implementation processes across education, health, community and public institutions in cities such as Tulcán, Huaca, Manta, Quito, Guayaquil and Machala. The methodology enabled schools to replicate inclusive practices, supported frontline professionals in delivering non-discriminatory services, and helped institutions integrate a human mobility approach into their policies and services. By providing practical tools that can be adapted to different contexts, the toolkit has strengthened social cohesion and promoted empathy and inclusion at the local level. This work was made possible thanks to the support of public and private sector donors, whose partnership helps turn inclusion into action.



## 📍 GUAYAQUIL

### Community spaces are essential for promoting the integration of refugees

UNHCR participated in the 2025 ODS Leaders' Summit organized by Revista Vistazo in Guayaquil. At a dedicated stand, UNHCR showcased its programmes and shared stories of resilience from refugees who are actively contributing to the development of their host communities. The event provided a platform to advocate for inclusion, challenge xenophobia, and highlight the positive impact of displaced people in Ecuador. Through initiatives like this, UNHCR continues to promote awareness and build support for inclusive and sustainable development, with the support of our donors.



## RESPONSE TO WEATHER EVENTS

### 📍 QUITO

#### Aid for landslide-stricken area and people

In response to recent landslides, UNHCR, with the support of flexible and earmarked donors, distributed hygiene kits and blankets to displaced families sheltered in temporary accommodations. By providing essential items such as soap, menstrual products, and warm blankets, the agency ensured immediate access to basic sanitary and thermal protection needs. This intervention helped prevent health risks associated with exposure, improved dignity, and supported recovery. Through logistics coordination and rapid deployment, UNHCR reinforced community resilience and access to critical services.



### 📍 ESMERALDAS

#### Humanitarian response to oil spill

Confronting the oil spill emergency, UNHCR led the humanitarian response alongside local partners, ensuring affected communities received vital services. With the support of donors, the agency supported the coordination of rapid assessments, the delivery of water purification supplies, and distributed sanitation materials to mitigate health hazards. By streamlining field coordination and leading protection efforts, UNHCR enhanced service delivery for affected people, including refugees, facilitating access to clean water, hygiene support, and health referrals. This integrated approach fortified local capacities to maintain essential lifesaving services.



### 📍 NATIONAL

#### Rapid flood response coordination

Aimed at heavy rains and floods, UNHCR deployed teams to support local authorities in delivering essential supplies to affected populations. By providing hygiene kits, blankets, and technical expertise, the agency enhanced logistical coordination and equitable distribution of relief items. UNHCR's presence strengthened emergency preparedness, ensuring rapid assessments and targeted assistance for vulnerable households. Through collaborative response mechanisms, it reinforced community resilience and safeguarded displaced families against weather-related hazards, reinforcing protection and recovery pathways for those at greatest risk. Rapid response to emergencies is only possible with the support of private and government donors of earmarked and flexible funding.





Stories from the field

## José's Voice From the Border to the Future

*"This doesn't depend on where we arrive, but on what we are willing to do and give in the place that will welcome us" - José Hermoso*

José arrived in 2017 to Lago Agrio, alone and searching for safety. Since then, he has put down roots in this city on Ecuador's northern border, where he has learned to endure, to chase his dreams, and to start over. Now that he has two homes, he says: "Although I'm from Venezuela, I also feel from Lago Agrio. I connect a lot with the energy of the people here, I love the food, I love the way people treat you."

The journey has not been easy, but in the midst of uncertainty José made an important decision: to start believing in his artistic project. His work as a carpenter sustains his life. Music sustains his dreams.

Not everything has been simple. He has experienced moments of xenophobia that hurt and leave a mark. Even so, he chose not to hold on to a single experience. As he explains: "I'm one of those who believe that human beings have evolved as we've learned to socialize. That's why it's important to welcome the person who arrives with something new, something different for my city, my country, and my comfort zone."

With the support of his family, José has been able to make his way and fully discover the world of music.

"My main project as an artist is to leave a positive message in society. That kid who maybe started very late still had a dream, stayed disciplined, and surrounded himself with people who motivated and supported him. That's my main message: even if we have thousands of challenges, difficulties, adversities — YES, WE CAN. And I'm willing to prove it."

As a young person and an agent of change in his community, he feels that, as an artist, he must make the most of every moment and of the opportunity that all human beings have to simply exist and live; for him, that is already a huge gift.

His message to young people who continue to be forcibly displaced is: "Always keep faith and hope, keep that desire to move forward, that drive to make things happen. This doesn't depend only on where we arrive, but on what we're willing to do and give in the place that will welcome us."

Today, José feels he belongs to two places. Venezuela will always be part of who he is — he doesn't rule out returning one day and bringing his projects there — but he also knows that here in Ecuador he still has many dreams to fulfill.

You can help us continue building a World of Possibilities for thousands of displaced people and their host communities in Ecuador. [Donate now.](#)

### We thank the contributions of our donors

31 November 2025

UNHCR Ecuador is grateful for the critical and generous support provided by donors who have contributed with earmarked and unearmarked funding.



UNHCR Ecuador is grateful for the support from private donors

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