

Annual Results Report

2023

Colombia

Acknowledgements

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- 4.1 - Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

Section 1: Context and Overview

1.1 Changes to the Operational Context

In 2023, the government reiterated its strong commitment to advance social transformations. It emphasized the need for collaboration among political parties and civil society to forge a national consensus. However, over time, political alliances weakened, and polarization within Congress hindered progress on reforms. The “Total Peace” policy advanced with continuing negotiations with various non-state armed actors, but confrontations between these groups intensified as they looked to expand control of territory.

The humanitarian situation remained a concern in 2023 with 146 large-group displacement events affecting 60,350 people (UNHCR monitoring), more than 200,000 victims in total of forced displacement (Victim’s Unit of the Government of Colombia) and 73 confinements in which 91,385 individuals were unable to move freely due to the presence of armed groups (UNHCR monitoring). At the same time, according to the UN Task Force on Resolution 1612, forced recruitment of children increased 93% compared to 2022.

Of the nearly 2.4 million Venezuelans who registered for Temporary Protection Status (TPS) in Colombia, 1.9 million received their Temporary Protection Permit valid for 10 years. More than 500,000 Venezuelans who registered did not yet receive their permit, while another nearly 500,000 remained in an irregular situation as they did not have access to the TPS due to the ending of the initiative.

Colombia’s role as a co-convenor of the second Global Refugee Forum held in December 2023 was an important opportunity to strengthen its leadership on human mobility, considering its situation as a country affected by armed conflict and large-scale internal displacement (6.9 million IDPs in need of continuing support and reparations by mid-2023), receiving returnees (980,000 Colombian and binational returnees), hosting refugees and migrants (2.9 million Venezuelans), and confronted with complex mixed movements crossing the country (over 520,000 people transited through Darien in 2023).

1.2. Progress Against the Desired Impact

1. Impact Area: Attaining Favorable Protection Environments

Displaced people, people at risk of displacement and people with international protection needs, including those with specific needs, access a fair and efficient protection system, in line with universal and regional standards, that guarantees their rights.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Actual (2023)
1.2 Proportion of people who are able to move freely within the country of habitual residence	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%

The situation of forcibly displaced people and those at risk of statelessness in accessing a fair and efficient protection system improved in 2023.

A significant breakthrough was the Constitutional Court's ruling SU-543 of 2023, which recognized asylum as a fundamental right in Colombia. UNHCR and its partners played a pivotal role by providing crucial background information that contributed to this landmark decision. At the same time, UNHCR supported the Colombian state in designing a new information system (HIT+) to enhancing the processing of refugee status recognition requests.

With support from UNHCR and other organizations, Migration Colombia approved, printed, and distributed more than 300,000 life-changing Temporary Protection Permits to Venezuelans, providing legal status in Colombia and opening the door to accessing various social services and the right to work legally. In addition to having previously provided the printers and cards required for the Temporary Protection Status (TPS) initiative, UNHCR specifically supported Migration Colombia's efforts to review 11,250 complicated cases in 2023 and facilitated access of Venezuelan children enrolled in school to the TPS.

Internally displaced people in Colombia benefited from UNHCR's support to the Colombian state and civil society in developing an updated baseline of the situation of IDPs through a nationwide survey, as well as the identification of areas requiring heightened attention to solutions. Likewise, the Constitutional Court, supported by UNHCR, renewed its monitoring of the Unconstitutional State of Affairs regarding internal displacement.

Finally, following extensive advocacy by UNHCR, the risk of statelessness for children of Venezuelan parents was significantly reduced in 2023 as the National Civil Registry extended the validity of the "Childhood First" measure for two more years until August 2025, allowing girls and boys to access Colombian nationality by birth.

2. Impact Area: Realizing Rights in Safe Environments

People UNHCR serves effectively meet their immediate and specific basic protection needs with a human right, age, gender and diversity and environmental approaches.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Actual (2023)
2.2 Proportion of people residing in physically safe and secure settlements with access to basic facilities	IDPs	Unknown	56.19%
2.2 Proportion of people residing in physically safe and secure settlements with access to basic facilities	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	92.89%	93.32%
2.3 Proportion of people with access to health services	Others of Concern	Unknown	85.04%
2.3 Proportion of people with access to health services	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	66.91%

UNHCR directly assisted over 638,000 refugees and migrants, internally displaced people (IDPs), returnees, host community and people at risk of statelessness in 2023, including more than 230,000 who were provided information on access to rights and services. Moreover, UNHCR continued its registration efforts with more than one million individuals entered in ProGres by the end of 2023 facilitating their access to assistance.

The protection needs of those making the difficult journey through Darien were addressed in part through the provision of orientation and legal assistance, psychosocial support, and lifesaving water purification tablets to more than 100,000 people. Moreover, for those who decided to desist from their journey, UNHCR provided transportation back to other locations in Colombia.

In terms of cash assistance, UNHCR helped 5,540 families (16,620 individuals) to purchase food, access shelter and cover health and hygiene expenses. Of these, 92% reported a significant improvement in their living conditions, and 90% informed of a moderate or significant reduction in stress related to household expenses.

The situation of Venezuelans accessing health services substantially improved in 2023 with 1.4 million Venezuelans were affiliated within the public healthcare system in Colombia, representing 74% of the population holding a Temporary Protection Permit or nearly 50% of all Venezuelans in Colombia. This included more than 23,000 individuals who were registered through UNHCR's support to a health insurance enrolment initiative. The increase of Venezuelans from 2022 to 2023 was of 499,687 new affiliations in the system.

Venezuelan children have the right to education irrespective of their status per the policy of the Government of Colombia, they represent 6% of school enrollments, roughly equivalent to their share of the total population of Colombia.

3. Impact Area: Empowering Communities and Achieving Gender Equality

People UNHCR serves and communities effectively exercise their right to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives with a human rights-based and an age, gender and diversity approach.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Actual (2023)
3.1 Proportion of people who have the right to decent work	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	69.18%
3.2a Proportion of children and young people enrolled in primary education	IDPs	Unknown	77.45%
3.2a Proportion of children and young people enrolled in primary education	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	53.02%	53.02%
3.2b Proportion of children and young people enrolled in secondary education	IDPs	Unknown	72.62%
3.2b Proportion of children and young people enrolled in secondary education	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	22.22%	22.22%
3.3 Proportion of people feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark	IDPs	Unknown	23.60%
3.3 Proportion of people feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark	Others of Concern	Unknown	32.07%
3.3 Proportion of people feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	21.35%

UNHCR's community engagement initiatives resulted in a notable increase in the participation of refugees, migrants, internally displaced people, and host communities in decisions that directly affect their lives. These efforts fostered direct collaboration with local and national authorities to seek sustainable solutions. This transformative process was evident in the empowerment and capacity-building initiatives, which

triggered the active involvement and consultation with participants, thereby strengthening leadership roles and autonomy within communities.

Empowered communities asserted rights, developed self-governing structures, and formulated community development plans, thereby enhancing their engagement in consultation spaces, particularly among indigenous people and people of African descent. They had, for instance, effectively advocated for their perspectives and highlighted challenges related to the impact of armed conflict, influencing decision-makers at both local and national levels, including discussions surrounding the National Development Plan and the peace agreement.

UNHCR efforts empowering communities enabled the legalization of 35 informal settlements since 2016, benefiting 45,000 individuals. Notably, community leaders emerged as recognized intermediaries by local authorities, facilitating orderly land titling processes and improving access to essential services such as healthcare and education for indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities.

Initiatives targeting youth empowerment and the establishment of networks raised awareness, enhanced self-protection in communities, and fostered social cohesion, thereby making it increasingly difficult for armed actors to recruit youth and mitigating forced recruitment while contributing to the recovery of community spaces and fostering peaceful coexistence.

4. Impact Area: Securing Solutions

The people UNHCR serves find the most appropriate solution to their situation with effective enjoyment of their rights achieving full inclusion.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Actual (2023)
4.2a Number of people who departed on resettlement	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	4	660
4.3b Number of refugees for whom residency status is granted or confirmed	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	61

The situation of forcibly displaced and stateless people improved in 2023 regarding finding the most appropriate solution towards effective enjoyment of their rights and achieving full inclusion. Of the 2.9 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants currently in Colombia, 1.9 million obtained a Temporary Protection Permit, which granted them the right to seek formal employment opportunities. While data on the number of Venezuelans who obtained formal employment was not available during the reporting period, based on UNHCR’s extensive engagement and advocacy with the private sector it was noted a significant increase in the number of Venezuelans accessing formal employment. Progress was also made on removing barriers to financial inclusion for with regular Venezuelans such as opening bank accounts (515,000 Venezuelans currently had a bank account in Colombia by end-2023), as well as the recognition of Venezuelans’ secondary school diplomas and vocational trade certifications.

Continued progress was made in 2023 advancing towards sustainable solutions for internally displaced people (IDP) and refugees through the legalization of informal settlements which then facilitate the establishment of critical services such as water and electricity. In 2023, a further 2,800 people benefited from legalization while another 3,208 people in these settlements received land titles. This initiative was particularly relevant given the national survey on the socio-economic situations of IDPs, financed by UNHCR in 2023, which revealed that 75% of IDPs expressed a preference to remain in their current locations.

UNHCR and IOM developed the Safe Mobility Initiative, supported by the USA government, aimed at providing improved access to resettlement and other legal pathways to the USA for Venezuelans, Cubans, and Haitians in Colombia. In 2023, more than 5,200 people were submitted for resettlement through this programme, in addition to the 1,268 people submitted through regular resettlement.

1.3 Challenges to Achieving Impacts

Colombia is a complex environment that offers many opportunities but also a variety of barriers and challenges in progressing towards the expected impacts.

With respect to solutions for Venezuelan refugees and migrants, 500,000 eligible for Temporary Protection Status did not receive their identity document for various reasons, including technical complications, the itinerant nature of the population and challenges in reaching those located in more remote areas of the country. There were also insufficient slots for Venezuelan children in some schools of the country, as well as capacity issues in many municipalities in applying the means test (SISBEN) that is required to access a wide variety of social services in Colombia.

While the Total Peace policy brought encouraging developments, including various ceasefires between the Colombian Armed Forces and non-state armed actors, displacement, and confinements continued to characterize significant swaths of Colombia's territory in 2023. At the same time, these non-state armed groups expanded their presence, reaching by mid-2023 534 of Colombia's districts which comprise 68% of Colombia's rural population. These developments disproportionately affected indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, leading to increased risks of displacement, confinement, gender-based violence and forced recruitment.

At the same time, the dramatic growth of flows of refugees and migrants through the Darien placed significant strain on local communities and governments, and heightened protection risks for vulnerable people on the move, particularly children.

Given the nature of the barriers, the prospects for overcoming those associated with solutions for the Venezuelan population seem more attainable compared with those related to internal displacement, confinement, and mixed movements for which UNHCR's role realistically is more focused on mitigating the impacts as opposed to overcoming the barriers.

1.4 Collaboration and Partnerships

Key to achieving progress towards the expected impacts in 2023 was UNHCR's collaboration with the new national government. UNHCR has two Memoranda of Understanding with the Government of Colombia which underpin this collaboration. These are complemented by a workplan for the 2021-2024 period agreed with the government, outlining UNHCR's protection and solutions priorities. Key partners in 2023 included the Constitutional Court, the Victims Unit, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, the Ombudsperson Office, Migration Colombia, the Foreign Ministry, and various line ministries, as well as an extensive network of collaboration with authorities at the local level across the 24 departments covered by UNHCR.

At the same time, UNHCR ensured the alignment of its work with UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for 2020-2023. Moreover, in 2023, UNHCR participated in the formulation of the new UNSDCF to be launched in 2024, including co-leading the Total Peace, Human Security and Social Justice pillar.

UNHCR's work with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) was once again a key component of progress towards expected impacts, particularly through its 18 partnership agreements with NGOs which resulted in over 850,000 instances of protection and assistance being provided to 638,000 people during the year. UNHCR continued in 2023 its co-leadership with IOM of the Interagency Group for Mixed Migration Flows (GIFMM the National R4V Platform), which brought together 83 partners. As of 31 December 2023, the Refugees and Migrants Response Plan (RMRP) implemented a total of \$178 million of activities for Colombia benefiting more than 1.3 million refugees and migrants (incl. refugees and migrants of all nationalities in-transit) and affected host community members, while coordinating also the operational response for the ever-increasing and multi-directional onward and transit movements of refugees and migrants of multiple nationalities.

Similarly, for the humanitarian response for IDPs, UNHCR co-led the national Protection Cluster, with the Norwegian Refugee Council and Danish Refugee Council, and contributed to the implementation of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) that supported 388,000 people at risk or affected by conflict and the effects of climate change.

Section 2: Results

2.1. Outcomes and Achievements

1. Outcome Area: Access to Territory, Reg. and Documentation

People UNHCR serves can access the territory without being returned.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
1.2 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority	IDPs	Unknown	80.00%	98.69%
1.2 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority	Others of Concern	Unknown	40.00%	37.27%
1.2 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	61.00%	23.79%
1.3 Proportion of people with legally recognized identity documents or credentials	IDPs	Unknown	99.00%	98.70%
1.3 Proportion of people with legally recognized identity documents or credentials	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	59.00%	44.73%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

To prevent refoulement in transit zones, the Public Ministry (national and local Ombudspersons' Offices) as well as UNHCR legal partners, intervened in several cases both at the international airport and at border crossings, towards ensuring access to asylum procedures, guaranteeing respect for due process and adequate treatment of the people under UNHCR's mandate.

Considering the turnover of migration officials across the country in 2023 due to the change of Government, UNHCR carried out trainings on international protection, benefitting 1,300 people from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Migration Colombia, the Ombudsperson's Office, the Attorney General's Office and other key partners. These trainings were instrumental in familiarizing new personnel with international protection principles, particularly emphasizing access to territory, non-refoulement, and respect for due process in immigration proceedings.

UNHCR also promoted a two year's extension for the administrative measure taken by the Colombian Government called which allowed 102,000 children born in Colombia to Venezuelan parents who did not meet the residency requirement, to obtain Colombian nationality.

Finally, UNHCR offered technical assistance and provided written feedback to the Internal Group on Nationality of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding a Refugee Status Determination Procedure for the Stateless. The procedure, incorporating UNHCR's comments, was officially endorsed by the Colombian Government in December 2023.

2. Outcome Area: Status Determination

Registration, documentation and asylum processes, as well as temporary protection permit status are effective and accessible to the people UNHCR serves.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
2.1 Average processing time (in days) from registration to first instance asylum decision	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	765.00	688.00	1,016.00
2.2 Proportion of people undergoing asylum procedures who have access to legal representation	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	99.67%	100.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR continued its efforts to facilitate the registration of Venezuelans under the Temporary Protection Status (TPS) by supporting Migration Colombia in implementing the TPS programme, ensuring that all eligible Venezuelans receive their Temporary Protection Permit (TPP). By December 2023, with UNHCR's assistance, Migration Colombia reviewed 11,250 cases and conducted mass TPP distributions in various regions of the country. Furthermore, UNHCR provided Migration Colombia with specialized printers and plastic cards to expedite the issuance of 100,000 TPPs. (PAOs) also played a crucial role in providing information and counseling to 21,613 individuals on TPS access, registration procedures, and other related matters. Additionally, Migration Colombia implemented alternative measures such as issuing Certificates of Registration for individuals who fulfilled the requirements but had not yet received a response. UNHCR enhanced its PAO strategy expanding to a total of seventy-eight points across Colombia in 2023. These centers provided vital assistance by offering information, guidance, and support in asylum application processes, assisting 97,497 individuals, many of whom presented various assistance requests. Furthermore, 174,000 Specific Protection Needs (NEPs) were identified among refugees, for stateless people and others in need of international protection, with 27,094 cases being referred to protection routes and services.

Regarding the Internal Working Group on Refugee Status Determination (GIT-Refugio), UNHCR supported the entity in reducing the backlog of asylum applications. UNHCR provided GIT-Refugio with technical and human resources support to address cases that had remained pending for over four years. Additionally, with UNHCR's assistance, the Ministry of External Relations implemented changes to the asylum application form, aiming to streamline the analysis of submitted applications.

Lastly, UNHCR and its partners registered a total of 131,596 individuals, 55% being women and 45% men. Additionally, 1,756 new initial basic registrations were conducted, 62% involving women and 38% men (focal points). Overall, UNHCR registered 133,352 people in 2023, providing valuable disaggregated data on the specific needs of individuals under UNHCR's mandate.

3. Outcome Area: Protection Policy and Law

The implementation of the legal framework and policy is improved and decentralized, and public programmes are developed to strengthen the protection system and access to rights with an age, gender and diversity approach.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR provided technical and financial support to the Constitutional Court, aiding in the assessment of structural deficiencies in State budget allocation and inter-institutional coordination concerning internal displacement. This support also facilitated the implementation of four case studies examining displacement situations across the country, serving as foundational research for forthcoming rulings by the Constitutional Court on structural inadequacies.

Additionally, UNHCR extended technical and financial assistance to a renowned civil society organization (CODHES) leading a Survey on the Socioeconomic Situation of IDPs. This survey, the first since the signing of the Peace Agreement, offered an essential baseline data to inform the formulation of public policies addressing displacement solutions.

UNHCR collaborated with the Victim's Unit (JARIV) and the Attorney General's Office to design pathways for local urban integration. These initiatives aimed to identify challenges and gaps in the state's response to displacement and facilitate the monitoring of solutions provided to IDPs from a local integration perspective. Similarly, UNHCR provided technical and human resources assistance to the Ministry of the Interior and the Attorney General's Office to enhance procedures related to the care of victims of the armed conflict. These guidelines, slated for adoption in 2024, ensured equitable access to state services for all individuals affected by Colombia's internal conflict, irrespective of nationality or legal status.

Furthermore, UNHCR and UNICEF developed a Joint Action Plan for 2023-2024, focusing on implementing a policy to include children in national systems, and respond to their needs as well as to prevent recruitment and sexual violence against children. Additionally, UNHCR offered feedback on the Colombia-Venezuela Memorandum of Understanding, providing recommendations for the protection and safe repatriation of Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) to Venezuela.

4. Outcome Area: Gender-based Violence

The risks of gender-based violence are reduced for the people we serve and survivors of gender-based violence have adequate, timely and quality access to multisectoral services..

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2023, UNHCR established a national network of funded partners focusing on addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) to play a pivotal role in delivering comprehensive responses to 14,232 GBV survivors. This initiative supported 3,414 actions aimed at preventing and mitigating GBV risks. Additionally, UNHCR provided support to three Safe Houses, allocating human and financial resources to benefit 506 GBV survivors at high-risk with life-saving assistance and legal and psychosocial support.

Furthermore, UNHCR enhanced the capacities of community-based organizations in addressing GBV. Initiatives such as the Training School for Women Leaders and the "Fostering Positive Masculinities" strategy empowered community leaders to identify GBV risks and activate institutional referral pathways when a survivor sought for assistance.

In terms of institutional responses to GBV, UNHCR allocated human and financial resources to local family protection institutions ("Comisarías de Familia," in Spanish) and the Ombudsperson's Office. As a result, 1,072 GBV survivors received legal and psychosocial support from these state institutions. Additionally, public servants increased their knowledge on GBV standards and international protection protocols.

5. Outcome Area: Child Protection

The children we serve are protected from all forms of violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination, and have access to the child protection system and friendly procedures.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
5.1 Proportion of children at heightened risk who are supported by a Best Interests Procedure	IDPs	Unknown	40.00%	37.11%
5.1 Proportion of children at heightened risk who are supported by a Best Interests Procedure	Others of Concern	Unknown	20.00%	17.90%
5.1 Proportion of children at heightened risk who are supported by a Best Interests Procedure	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	40.00%	30.97%
5.2 Proportion of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes	IDPs	Unknown	8.00%	4.91%
5.2 Proportion of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes	Others of Concern	Unknown	Unknown	0.11%

5.2 Proportion of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	5.00%	2.24%
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Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR, in collaboration with its partners, established a Specialized Network on Child Protection spanning 11 departments across the country. Through the creation of child-friendly spaces in communities and educational institutions, efforts were directed towards mitigating risks associated with armed conflict, such as recruitment, benefitting 16,434 children. Additionally, UNHCR bolstered the technical capacities of 455 child protection actors operating within public institutions, schools, communities, and civil society organizations.

Furthermore, UNHCR, alongside the Delegate from the National Ombudsperson's Office for Children, conducted training sessions for 3,783 officials of the National Family Welfare System, aimed at activating the Ombudsman's procedure for the protection of children under UNHCR's mandate. Moreover, support was extended for 1,363 advocacy actions geared towards safeguarding children's rights.

In a collaborative effort, the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF) received technical and financial assistance from UNHCR to effectively manage the cases of 227 children with specific protection needs, the majority of whom were Venezuelans, including unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). This support was complemented by building the capacities of 400 ICBF government officials, facilitating the activation of institutional protection pathways for the recognition of children's refugee status.

6. Outcome Area: Safety and Access to Justice

People UNHCR serves are protected from the effects of armed conflict and other forms of violence and exploitation.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Eighty-two local Ombudsperson's Offices (personeros) received human resources and financial support from UNHCR to amplify their work towards the respect of the rights of refugees, internally displaced people (IDP) and stateless people, including through the incorporation of such rights into relevant public policies. Additionally, UNHCR assisted local Ombudspersons receiving individual statements during large-scale displacement events, as well as conducted border monitoring activities. UNHCR maintained ongoing protection monitoring through its network of 19 field offices.

UNHCR collaborated in sharing information to analyze the identified risks faced by Venezuelan refugees and migrants within the Ombudsperson's Office's Early Warning System, particularly within the context of the internal armed conflict. In 2023, protection monitoring efforts were focused on issuing binational early warnings in the Darien and North Pacific region (bordering Panama), as well as along the border with Ecuador, thanks to UNHCR's support.

Additionally, UNHCR bolstered the presence of state institutions, such as the Delegate from the National Ombudsperson's Office (Defensor del Pueblo) for Human Mobility, in 12 departments. These delegates issued preventive orders to institutions responsible for protecting individuals and ensuring access to rights. As a result, UNHCR provided support to 15,477 people who received responses from the Ombudsperson's Office through four Houses of Rights and 20 Community Defenders.

In terms of access to legal guidance, UNHCR coordinated a legal network between the Public Ministry and partners to assist 35,553 people with individualized legal advice on international protection and access to rights for victims of the internal conflict. Legal brigades were deployed in hard-to-reach areas, providing legal assistance in 59 municipalities where the most vulnerable populations reside.

Similarly, UNHCR's legal partners engaged in strategic litigation. Furthermore, legal protection actions were initiated to raise awareness of Venezuelan children unable to access social services.

7. Outcome Area: Community Engagement and Women's

Empowerment

Civic spaces are expanded, and people UNHCR serves and communities are empowered and have strengthened self-protection mechanisms and autonomous self-management mechanisms.

Peaceful coexistence and community leadership increases integration and resilience in communities and decreases discrimination and xenophobia.

People UNHCR serves access two-way communication and feedback and response channels/mechanisms with adequate and timely information about their rights.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
7.3 Proportion of women participating in leadership/management structures	IDPs	Unknown	35.00%	27.09%
7.3 Proportion of women participating in leadership/management structures	Others of Concern	Unknown	35.00%	26.42%
7.3 Proportion of women participating in leadership/management structures	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	35.00%	27.01%
7.1 Extent participation of displaced and stateless people across programme phases is supported.	IDPs	Extensive: ≥70 points	Extensive: ≥70 points	Extensive: ≥70 points
7.1 Extent participation of displaced and stateless people across programme phases is supported.	Others of Concern	Unknown	Extensive: ≥70 points	Extensive: ≥70 points
7.1 Extent participation of displaced and stateless people across programme phases is supported.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Extensive: ≥70 points	Extensive: ≥70 points	Extensive: ≥70 points

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR played a pivotal role in expanding civic spaces, empowering communities, and fortifying self-protection mechanisms. Through the implementation of the Community Mobilization Roadmap, the operation bolstered community involvement and accountability, fostering an inclusive approach known as the Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) approach across 180 communities. Through 52 participatory assessments involving 2,357 refugees, migrants, returnees, and displaced people, crucial insights were gleaned into integration challenges and protection risks.

At the country level, the Community and Organizations Empowerment project positively impacted 10,278 people, facilitating the strengthening of 66 community-based organizations, 2 community protection networks, and 55 communities. Additionally, 8 local organization networks and 8 processes with ethnic groups across all operational areas of the country were bolstered. This was achieved through the development of comprehensive work plans aimed at enhancing organizational capacities in strategic, operational, technical, and advocacy realms.

Moreover, the project focused on implementing strategies for local integration and peaceful coexistence, empowering authorities, and enhancing self-protection mechanisms to safeguard collective rights. The project also delivered communication strategies, psychosocial support and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). The engagement of 45 volunteers through the Community Volunteer Project further enhanced community outreach, disseminating critical information to 10,988 people and fostering improved feedback mechanisms for heightened community engagement.

To measure the impact of these initiatives, UNHCR developed an Impact Measurement Tool, enabling a comprehensive assessment of community processes. This approach facilitated a nuanced understanding of

intervention effectiveness.

8. Outcome Area: Well-Being and Basic Needs

Sufficient and efficient orientation and activation response mechanisms coordinated and articulated institutional response, and support of humanitarian, civil society and other relevant actors ensure that people UNHCR serves have timely and adequate access to services and assistance, applying the UNHCR strategic framework for climate action.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
8.1 Proportion of people that receive cash transfers and/or non-food items	IDPs	Unknown	1.00%	0.03%
8.1 Proportion of people that receive cash transfers and/or non-food items	Others of Concern	Unknown	1.00%	0.11%
8.1 Proportion of people that receive cash transfers and/or non-food items	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	1.00%	0.46%
8.2 Proportion of people with primary reliance on clean (cooking) fuels and technology	IDPs	Unknown	95.00%	95.00%
8.2 Proportion of people with primary reliance on clean (cooking) fuels and technology	Others of Concern	Unknown	32.00%	41.61%
8.2 Proportion of people with primary reliance on clean (cooking) fuels and technology	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	94.00%	26.47%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR worked with partners to ensure an effective response to the national humanitarian situation. It played a strong co-lead role in the , the local expression of the , and led the within the humanitarian architecture for IDPs. UNHCR effectively responded to 11 emergencies, with assistance that included inter alia distributing and installing 50 family tents, supporting 5 shelters and hotel networks in border zones, benefiting 4,143 people, as well as distributing 22,073 Core Relief Items. Additionally, as part of scaling-up the response in the Darien, UNHCR provided water purification tablets to 574,210 individuals and delivered quality mental health and psychosocial care services to 1,657 people. For the most vulnerable, UNHCR offered humanitarian transportation, information, and orientation services, as well as temporary shelter prior to their arrival in the Darien.

UNHCR provided multipurpose cash grants benefitting 5,540 households (18,171 individuals) in 2023. Regarding cash assistance, the amount authorized by the government increased by 36% for 2024 after lobbying by the CBI task force that UNHCR co-chaired.

In cooperation with 45 municipalities and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, UNHCR supported the affiliation of 23,000 people to the Colombian Health system. Also UNHCR trained 5,287 government officials and health personnel on the current normative regulations and provided orientation and accompaniment to 5,077 people who experienced access barriers. In the realm of education, UNHCR rolled out the Pedagogical Route to Inclusion and Interculturality to 14 municipalities, equipping them with technical and administrative tools for integrating refugees and migrants into the Colombian educational system. This model, implemented by UNHCR and partner Corporación Opción Legal, reached 11,528 children and 56 educational institutions from July 2019 to June 2023. Some of the students who participated in the programme are now enrolled in the global . Finally, through an innovative project, UNHCR recycled 1,500 refugee housing units (RHU). The RHUs were used to produce recyclable blocks to build a library in a

rural school in La Guajira. The project was presented to Better Shelter for possible replication.

13. Outcome Area: Self Reliance, Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods

Government and private sector ensure access of people UNHCR serves to decent work and sustainable livelihoods, social dialogue, and social protection systems.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
13.1. Proportion of people with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider	Others of Concern	Unknown	50.00%	37.86%
13.1. Proportion of people with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	26.29%	40.79%
13.2. Proportion of people who self-report positive changes in their income compared to previous year	Others of Concern	Unknown	Unknown	6.72%
13.2. Proportion of people who self-report positive changes in their income compared to previous year	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	33.00%	5.83%
13.3 Proportion of people (working age) who are unemployed	IDPs	Unknown	42.00%	17.63%
13.3 Proportion of people (working age) who are unemployed	Others of Concern	Unknown	Unknown	8.71%
13.3 Proportion of people (working age) who are unemployed	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	21.34%	20.00%	36.76%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR and its partners supported over 85 small entrepreneurs with technical capacity and cash assistance (seed capital) to strengthen their business initiatives. Additionally, through strategic alliances with Chambers of Commerce, the National Association of Colombia Entrepreneurs (ANDI) and different universities in the country, 2,090 people under UNHCR's mandate were enrolled in training and advisory programmes for their business growth.

In collaboration with the National Learning Service (SENA), more than 771 refugees and asylum-seekers were trained and enhanced their skills through certification programmes to obtain formal jobs, promoting economic self-sufficiency and labour inclusion.

Furthermore, UNHCR and the Colombian Ministry of Labour advocated for the inclusion of refugees and migrants in the labour market. In 2023, 19 private sector companies engaged and decided to employ 285 refugees and migrants. In terms of financial inclusion, UNHCR led the Technical Working Group on Financial Inclusion. UNHCR reviewed guidelines, mapped services, and provided financial sector training, which contributed to the financial inclusion of 377 refugees and asylum-seekers.

15. Outcome Area: Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

Durable solutions are accessible to people UNHCR serves with specific protection needs who cannot locally integrate in Colombia.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
15.1 Number of refugees submitted by UNHCR for resettlement	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	534	6,146	6,540
15.2 Average processing time from resettlement submission to departure under normal priority	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	360.00	280.00

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2023, UNHCR and IOM bolstered their resettlement response providing a safe and legal pathway for eligible refugees and migrants to enter the United States, and other countries. In a short period of time, UNHCR managed to implement an efficient system for identifying and processing resettlement applications on a large scale. Firstly, individuals seeking a lawful pathway to the United States completed a portal registration to assess their potential eligibility for referral to the Safe Mobility Offices (SMO). In 2023, a total of 77,855 people registered in the portal.

Subsequently, potentially eligible individuals underwent in-person appointments at Safe Mobility Offices (SMO) located in Bogotá, Medellín and Cali. In 2023, UNHCR and its partner, Corporación Opción Legal, received 6,647 applications (covering 17,841 people) for processing. These pre-assessments demonstrated a 95% effectiveness rate, facilitating a swift transition of cases to the subsequent stage, which involved a more rigorous review focusing on protection and identification of profiles with international protection needs. In the final stage of the process, UNHCR scheduled resettlement interviews at dedicated facilities. This benefited 6,314 people applying to the United States and 1,546 people applying to other countries.

Following a positive assessment at the resettlement interview, cases were referred to the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP). In 2023, 6,192 individuals were referred to the United States (5,244 under SMO and 948 regular resettlement), with an additional 320 individuals referred to other countries such as Canada, New Zealand, and Australia.

In terms of assistance, UNHCR provided multi-purpose cash grants based on vulnerability criteria to support individuals while awaiting a decision on their resettlement cases from the US. In 2023, priority was given to 602 cases (encompassing 1,657 individuals). Additionally, psychosocial support was extended to identified vulnerable individuals, and Safe House services were provided to victims of Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

16. Outcome Area: Integration and other Local Solutions

People UNHCR serves and host communities in urban and rural contexts have access to solutions process through an area-based approach.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
16.1 Proportion of people with secure tenure rights to housing and/or land	IDPs	15.52%	16.00%	19.48%
16.1 Proportion of people with secure tenure rights to housing and/or land	Others of Concern	Unknown	16.00%	6.33%
16.1 Proportion of people with secure tenure rights to housing and/or land	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	3.00%	0.53%
16.2 Proportion of people covered by national social protection systems	IDPs	Unknown	37.00%	37.60%
16.2 Proportion of people covered by national social protection systems	Others of Concern	Unknown	37.00%	45.72%

16.2 Proportion of people covered by national social protection systems	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	37.00%	27.84%
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Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Since 2011, UNHCR, in collaboration with the partner organization Corporación Opción Legal, strived to help legalize informal settlements, offering practical solutions to address land access issues. In 2023 alone, UNHCR conducted 11 initial assessments focused on advancing urban regularization processes. Additionally, 19 prioritized communities received technical assistance in urban regulations and legal support, equipping local governments with vital information for land planning to facilitate the legalization of informal settlements. By December 2023, a total of 75 informal human settlements had been incorporated into the country's land use plans (POT). With support from the Ministry of Housing, technical assistance was extended for land legalization and titling processes, ensuring local ownership of relevant rules and regulations.

Likewise, in 2023, UNHCR facilitated the titling process in numerous communities, resulting in the issuance of 432 individual land titles. This initiative provided stability and security to 805 displaced families who had been residing as landowners for several years but lacked legal title. Through collaborative efforts between UNHCR, partners, and communities, these processes successfully fostered integration between displaced people and host communities.

UNHCR also offered technical and legal assistance to two displaced indigenous communities, authorized by Colombian law to formalize as indigenous reserves ("resguardos"). The establishment and expansion of these indigenous communities, along with the division of rural land, fortified the territorial rights of these communities. Additionally, UNHCR supported eight indigenous and Afro Colombian communities in the process of return and resettlement following displacement.

2.2. Age, Gender and Diversity

UNHCR's Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) Policy in Colombia materialized by ensuring that the forcibly displaced and stateless people actively participated in all decisions that impact them. In 2023, UNHCR also promoted the following lines of intervention throughout its programmes:

Participation and Inclusion: UNHCR carried out 46 focal groups as parts of 52 participatory assessments consulting 2,023 people: 877 women (43 per cent), 354 men (17 per cent), and 792 children (29 per cent), divided into different groups categorized by their specific protection needs.

AGD-Inclusive Programming: All data collection, monitoring exercises and reporting carried out by UNHCR were disaggregated according to age, gender, and diversity. Age, gender, and diversity disaggregated data is standardized in the operation and includes sex, age, disability, and specific protection needs.

Communication and transparency: UNHCR implemented the regional strategy on communication with communities to ensure access to adequate and timely information to forcibly displaced and stateless people. Age, gender, and diversity communication materials were developed.

Feedback and response: UNHCR improved the accountability to affected people (AAP) system through the standardization of feedback formats, data collection and analysis using an age, gender, and diversity approach. The information collected was shared internally for analysis and to propose adjustments to the response. In 2023 a pilot on collective AAP was carried out with a few partners for improving our accountability.

Advancing Gender Equality: UNHCR had 572 employees, with women occupying 50% of these roles. In addition, the operation prioritized: i) strengthening women's organizations and cultivating women leadership; and ii) assistance for women and girls at high risk, as well as gender-based violence survivors.

Section 3: Resources

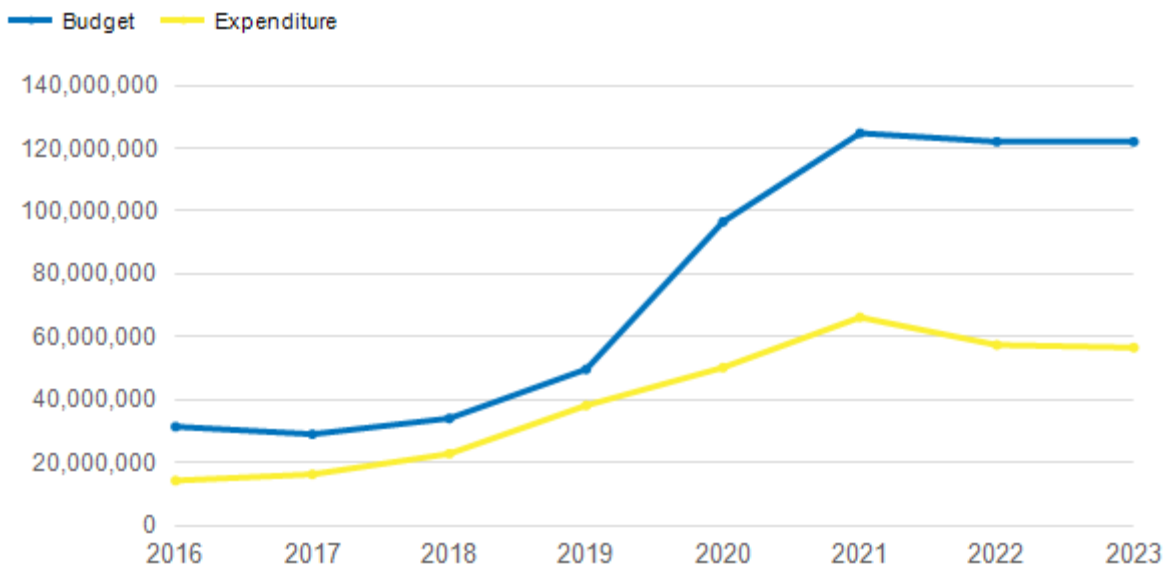
3.1 Financial Data

(Financial figures in USD)

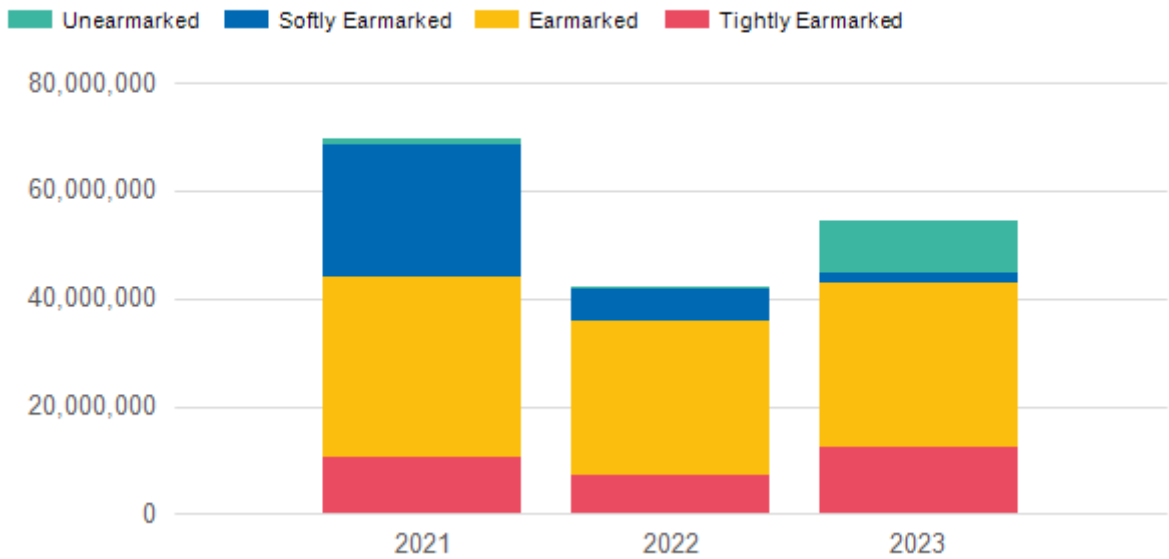
Impact Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
IA1: Protect	54,158,732	33,349,626	61.58%	33,105,455	99.27%
IA2: Assist	31,464,030	14,963,121	47.56%	14,952,711	99.93%
IA3: Empower	14,266,144	4,188,496	29.36%	4,188,496	100.00%
IA4: Solve	22,182,540	4,380,540	19.75%	4,380,540	100.00%
All Impact Areas		1,658			
Total	122,071,445	56,883,441	46.60%	56,627,203	99.55%

Outcome Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
OA1: Access/Doc	6,385,663	2,410,824	37.75%	2,410,824	100.00%
OA2: Status	15,145,692	12,613,018	83.28%	12,613,018	100.00%
OA3: Policy/Law	9,159,169	6,155,721	67.21%	5,911,550	96.03%
OA4: GBV	11,352,002	5,666,463	49.92%	5,666,463	100.00%
OA5: Children	11,433,867	5,984,231	52.34%	5,984,231	100.00%
OA6: Justice	682,339	519,370	76.12%	519,370	100.00%
OA7: Community	14,266,144	4,188,496	29.36%	4,188,496	100.00%
OA8: Well-being	31,464,030	14,952,711	47.52%	14,952,711	100.00%
OA10: Health		10,410			
OA13: Livelihood	6,476,972	2,962,784	45.74%	2,962,784	100.00%
OA15: Resettle	9,999,982	916,135	9.16%	916,135	100.00%
OA16: Integrate	5,705,586	501,621	8.79%	501,621	100.00%
All Outcome Areas		1,658			
Total	122,071,445	56,883,441	46.60%	56,627,203	99.55%

Budget and Expenditure Trend



Contributions Trend by Type



3.2. Resources Overview

2023 was a year of stability with respect to UNHCR’s core operational presence in Colombia in line with the comprehensive staffing and structural review (SSR) conducted in 2021 for the 2022-2023 period. However, a major expansion took place with the launching of the Safe Mobility Offices (SMO) initiative mid-year which resulted in the opening of three SMOs, six resettlement offices and the contracting of 100 new UNHCR staff, as well as more than 100 partner staff. In addition, another SSR took place in 2023 for the 2024-2025 period with a view to commencing a phased reduction in staffing (particularly international staff) and the closure of two field units in line with the evolving operational context and financial constraints. In line with UNHCR multi-year strategy, the Office shifted away from humanitarian assistance towards

comprehensive protection and solutions approaches. UNHCR also invested a much greater proportion of its limited resources across all geographic regions on selected key initiatives determined as being the most likely to bring a significant change to people's protection – for example, facilitating access to documentation, supporting the Ombudsperson function, and expanding the network of Information and Orientation Centers (PAOs).

UNHCR faced shortages in responding adequately to key areas, including massive movements across the Darien, protection and assistance for new displacements along the Pacific coast, and essential multi-purpose cash grants, for those Venezuelans in the most at-risk situations.

UNHCR sought to diversify financial support from non-traditional donors, particularly the private sector and selected governments. While these efforts unfolded in an increasingly competitive and challenging global environment marked by multiple crises, some successes were realized allowing UNHCR Colombia to maintain its standing as a relatively well funded operation.

Section 4: Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

4.1 Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

The establishment of UNHCR Colombia's multi-year strategy (2023-2026) has facilitated a clearer long-term vision for the operation, as well as an increased level of stability and predictability and improved monitoring and evaluation. With a clear roadmap for several years ahead, the organization has been able to better allocate resources, manage risks and respond to emerging challenges in a timely manner. Moreover, by setting clear targets and milestones, UNHCR is tracking progress, identifying areas for improvement and making stronger evidence-based decisions to optimize its interventions.

UNHCR Colombia's comprehensive overhaul of its programming framework and partnerships resulted in a significantly increased level of coherency and consistency in the operation in 2023, as well as a critical consolidation of partners from 52 in 2021 to 18 in 2023. A key lesson learned in this exercise was the successful use of the consortia mechanism to ensure a consistent programming approach while respecting the diversity of the local context and the strength of smaller local NGOs.

2023 marked the closure of several projects implemented by UNHCR for over 15 years. From this experience, UNHCR recognized the importance of transferring best practices to government institutions. UNHCR also piloted clear criteria for its engagement with and exit from communities in 2023. It also made important advances in harmonizing intervention and assistance criteria in the field and made important advances in harmonizing intervention and assistance criteria.

UNHCR Colombia continued to demonstrate the effectiveness of the area-based approach, targeting populations - refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons (IDPs) - facing the same problems living in the same rural or urban areas. The added value of UNHCR's field presence, targeted at key areas of displacement and inclusion, remained clear, particularly with respect to ensuring close engagement with communities affected.



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