

Edition's special focus:

UNHCR's work in the Refugee and Migrant Working Group



Alexis is from Venezuela. He lived with his wife Yennifer and their siblings in a small house in Cuenca. In May 2021, when he was ready to leave home to work, a flood invaded their house. The family received support from UNHCR.

Figures at a glance

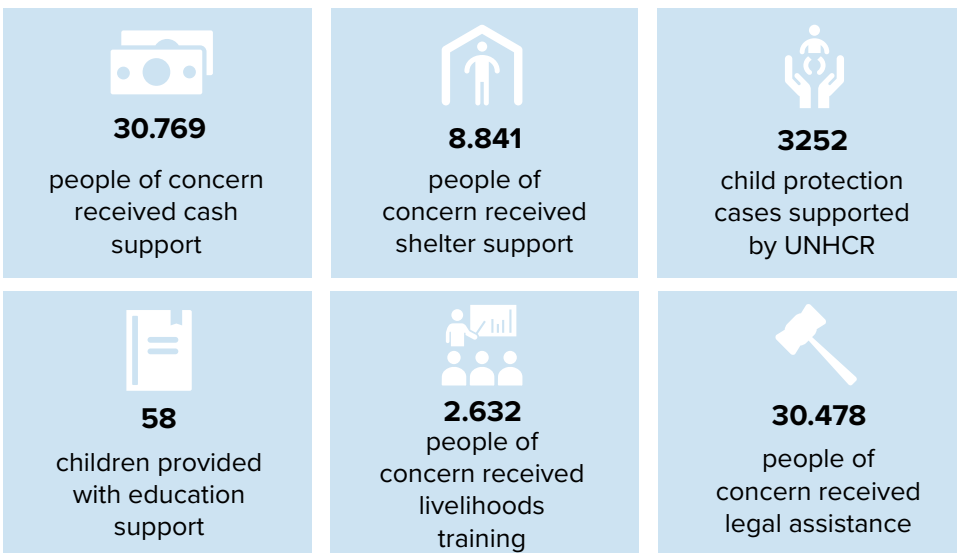
429.685

Venezuelans are currently living in Ecuador, approximately 50% in an irregular migratory situation.

11%

of UNHCR's financial requirements have been funded, as of 25 May.
Requirements for 2021: \$84.5 million (for the Venezuelan and Colombian Situation).

Between January and April 2021, in the framework of the response to the Venezuelan Situation:



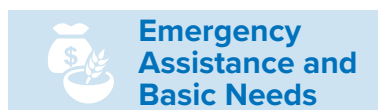
Operational context

Persons of concern to UNHCR, both Colombians and Venezuelans refugees and migrants who were already in precarious conditions before the COVID-19 crisis, have been significantly affected by restrictive lockdown measures resulting from the health emergency. Despite the closure of borders and the imposition of a visa on arrival for Venezuelans, refugees and migrants continue to enter the country mainly through the so-called "trochas," which are unofficial border crossings. This situation results in increased protection risks such as physical and sexual abuse, discrimination, exploitation, and a higher risk of trafficking.

In this dire context, besides addressing xenophobia and

promoting solidarity, UNHCR delivers emergency assistance and pursues local integration by promoting self-reliance and resilience for people of concern, especially women at risk of sexual and gender-based violence, and by facilitating their access to rights, documentation, services, and livelihoods opportunities by working closely with national and local authorities, as well as the private sector and NGO partners.

UNHCR is a crucial actor in developing the pathway to resilience and lasting solutions for refugees from the resilience perspective. To be a bridge in the humanitarian-development nexus for refugees and migrants, UNHCR identified the following prioritized areas:





PROTECTION

UNHCR leads the Protection Working Group of the GTRM with the support of NRC. Additionally, in coordination with partners, UNHCR provides direct assistance and orientation over rights and entitlements. Through different virtual and digital channels, UNHCR disseminates information on access to the asylum system and services. Moreover, UNHCR provides technical and financial support to strengthen the asylum system through registration, case management, and the application of protection standards, and works in close collaboration with the Public Defender's Office and the Ombudsman's Office to ensure that people of concern have access to justice. UNHCR has provided the Ministry of Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility with technical advice and material and staff support for the registration and regularization processes. In 2021, UNHCR will assist 130.00 people of concern through direct implementation and partners' services.

On the other hand, our community-based protection strategy aims at facilitating the inclusion of people of concern to their local communities in cooperation with local partners and protection networks by implementing peaceful coexistence

projects, addressing xenophobia and discrimination. UNHCR works closely with refugee and host communities, supporting refugee-led organizations and community-based organizations working with people at higher risk. Prevention, risk mitigation, and response services focus on gender-based violence and child protection issues. In addition, UNHCR is also ensuring persons of concern have fair access to social services, such as education and health. Finally, UNHCR is active in providing individual assistance, including legal, psychological, and social work services; capacity building to humanitarian staff, public functionaries, and host community members and community engagement to raise awareness and empowerment.

Financial requirement: USD 11.915.958

For more information about UNHCR's work, read:

- [Community consultations to identify gaps and needs](#)
- [Protection Monitoring](#)



EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE AND BASIC NEEDS

UNHCR co-leads this Working Group. Moreover, UNHCR's cash assistance plays a vital and life-saving role in addressing the urgent protection needs of refugees, besides diminishing the risk for families to resort to negative coping mechanisms. UNHCR delivers multipurpose grants to 40.000 beneficiaries for three consecutive months, acting as an emergency safety net, allowing access to food, shelter, hygiene, and other basic needs. UNHCR adapted the delivery mechanism during the pandemic, shifting from cash in hand to withdrawal from ATMs using codes to avoid physical contact. In line with this, the targeting evaluation for CBI was also switched from face-to-face interviews to phone/video calls. Moreover, the targeting criteria were expanded to view the increased number of vulnerable people because of COVID-19. This approach continues through 2021; since the lockdown and social distancing measures are still intermittently in place and the country's vaccination plan progresses slowly. UNHCR also provides sectoral cash assistance for documentation or livelihood components. UNHCR seeks to offer comprehensive and holistic support to vulnerable families through close collaboration with World Food Programme and Unicef in the UN Common Cash Statement framework. This agreement aims at working in a more coordinated and collaborative manner to ensure efficiency and a better experience for beneficiaries.

In the context of the health emergency, the provision of shelter continues to be a priority for refugees and migrants. UNHCR focuses its intervention on supporting emergency shelters

with equipment and improvement of physical conditions for them to comply with COVID-19 measures. UNHCR shelter unit plays a vital role in the training and disseminating awareness and sensitization material about safe construction and shelter management, with particular attention to improving community services in the shelters. Important to highlight the collaboration with the Ministry of Health to install refugee housing units (RHU) to serve as isolation units, triage wards in key health centers, particularly in border areas with high concentrations of people of concern. UNHCR intervention also focuses on improving local integration through habitability interventions that ensure refugees and migrants access housing and safe environments. UNHCR improves physical and contractual housing conditions in buildings rented by persons of concern. In 2021, 30.000 people of concern will benefit from this area of intervention. Finally, UNHCR works with community health promoters to develop organizational, monitoring, accompaniment, and health recovery processes, at the community level.

**Financial requirement for cash assistance:
USD 10.244.422,44**

**Financial requirement for the health emergency:
USD 3.000.000,00**

For more information about UNHCR's work, read:

- [UNHCR Ecuador Shelter Factsheet](#)
- [UNHCR Ecuador Health Factsheet](#)

 **LIVELIHOODS**

UNHCR co-leads, together with other partners, the Financial Inclusion Working Group of the Socioeconomic Integration Working Group of the GTRM. Moreover, UNHCR accompanies refugees and migrants in their path to reclaiming control of their future by gaining access to the labor market in their host communities, allowing them to seize economic opportunities. Through decent work, refugees and migrants can provide for their family’s needs, maintain their dignity, and become more resilient and empowered. UNHCR and partners actively promote Venezuelans and Colombians refugees and migrants’ economic inclusion through vocational training opportunities; delivery of seed capitals; capacity building to improve technical skills as well as context information to access the market labor; advocacy for financial inclusion and the right to work; and access to skills and qualifications recognition. Economic recovery efforts demand an even closer collaboration with the private sector to propose market-based and livelihoods solutions for the most vulnerable population, promote shared value initiatives, and establish links and innovative business models. UNHCR builds strong relationships with companies, business incubators, the academia, among other actors, to promote labor inclusion, entrepreneurship for refugees and host communities, and access to a wide range of support services, especially digital inclusion. The chambers of commerce and economic development agencies play an essential role in building the enabling environment regarding refugees’ rights in the labor market and reducing xenophobia and exploitation. UNHCR places refugees and migrants on a sustainable pathway by implementing comprehensive livelihoods initiatives that allow them to move from daily subsistence to income-generating activities and self-reliance.

Financial requirement: USD 11.082.779,72



For more information about UNHCR’s work, read:

- [UNHCR Ecuador Livelihoods Factsheet](#)
- [Systematization of livelihood and financial inclusion projects](#)

 **COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION**












UNHCR works at a national level to strengthen alliances focused on promoting public policies that advance the local integration of refugees in Ecuador. UNHCR works with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Government, National Councils for Equality, the Cantonal Board on Rights Protection, the Civil Registry, the National Assembly, and other state institutions such as the Public Defender’s Office and the Ombudsman’s Office, as well as local governments at different levels. To strengthen its response in different working areas such as humanitarian assistance, livelihoods, child protection, SGBV prevention, LGBTI protection, community empowerment, and self-reliance, UNHCR works together with 20 specialized international and national NGOs. The following map summarizes UNCHR presence in Ecuador:



REFUGEE AND MIGRANTS RESPONSE PLAN

UNHCR and IOM co-lead the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform to respond to the Venezuelan situation. The platform is composed of 43 organizations and UN agencies. It aims to address the protection, assistance, and integration needs of refugees and migrants from Venezuela in Latin American and Caribbean states. The Regional

Platform is being replicated at country levels by establishing and strengthening local coordination mechanisms in close collaboration with host Governments. The following table summarizes the platform financial requirements at a national level:

 WASH \$450,000.00	 Shelter \$3,000,000.00	 Multipurpose CBI \$10,244,422.44	 Food security \$400,000.00	 Health \$886,200.00	 Education \$1,271,500.00
 Integration \$11,082,779.72	 Protection \$8,667,193.76	 Protection (GBV) \$1,551,264.08	 Child Protection \$1,697,500.00	 Common services (Coordination) \$460,000.00	



We thank the contributions of our donors

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