



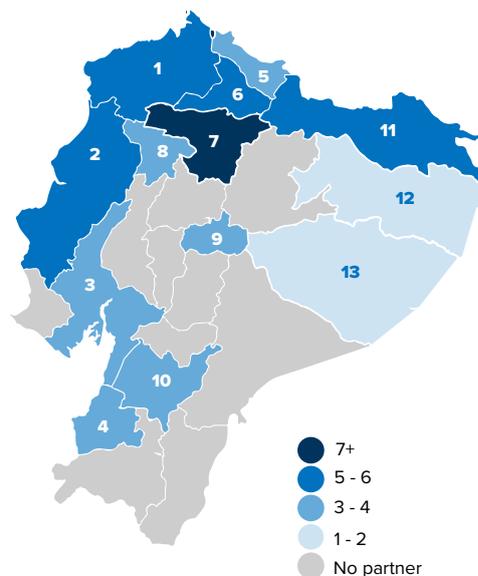
Humberto is a Venezuelan mechanic who, with UNHCR and AVSI's support, was able to open his own business in Manta. Read his story at page 4.

Figures at a glance

UNHCR's partners for 2021

1 Esmeraldas	Aldeas SOS, FEPP, FUDELA, HIAS, NRC
2 Manabí	Aldeas SOS, AVSI, CARE, HIAS, NRC, World Vision
3 Guayas	Aldeas SOS, CDH, HIAS, NRC SJR
4 El Oro	CARE, COOPI, HIAS, MMO
5 Carchi	Aldeas SOS, FUDELA, HIAS, NRC
6 Imbabura	Aldeas SOS, FUDELA, HIAS, MSC, NRC
7 Pichincha	Aldeas SOS, ALDHEA, ASA, Equidad, FUDELA, HIAS, NRC, SJR, World Vision
8 S. Domingo	ADRA, FUDELA, HIAS, NRC
9 Tungurahua	ALDHEA, NRC, Visión Mundial
10 Azuay	ALDHEA, AVSI HIAS, NRC
11 Sucumbíos	ALDHEA, FMS, FUDELA, HIAS, NRC, Fundación Tarabita
12 Orellana	FUDELA, NRC
13 Pastaza	ALDHEA

Total: 19 partners, 13 provinces

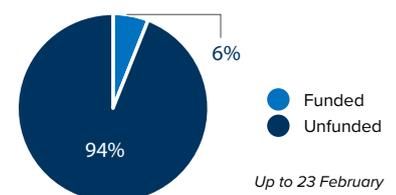


70,246
people have been
recognized as refugees, 97%
of them are Colombian.

415,835
Venezuelans are currently
living in Ecuador, 48%
of them in an irregular
migratory situation.

UNHCR Ecuador's funding situation:

Financial requirements for 2021:
\$84,5 million



Up to 23 February

Operational context

COVID-19: confirmed cases have surpassed 268.000 nationwide, and are expected to increase during the following weeks due to non-compliance with biosecurity measures and social distancing during the Carnival Holiday. Authorities have postponed the re-opening of the international border with Colombia at Rumichaca International Bridge (the main point of entry of Venezuelans) to 1 June. The border has been closed since 16 March 2020 due to the pandemic.

BORDER MOVEMENTS: Arrivals of Venezuelans at the border with Colombia were slightly lower due to heavy rains and high military presence, likely also as a result of

the Colombian Government's announcement of its plan to regularize Venezuelans. UNHCR and its partners identified approximately 400-500 Venezuelans entering daily through visible irregular paths in Carchi and 35 in Sucumbíos. However, many Venezuelans continue to enter Ecuador through less visible irregular paths at night hours, exposing themselves to severe protection risks, so this is likely to be an undercount. At the southern border, despite of Peruvian military presence, Venezuelans continue to cross towards Peru. For the first time since the start of the pandemic, UNHCR has identified an increase in Venezuelans traveling towards Colombia.

UNHCR's Representative and Deputy on mission to Guayaquil and Cuenca



From 10 to 12 February, UNHCR's Representative and Deputy Representative held a mission to Guayaquil and Cuenca, two cities with a high presence of Venezuelans, located in the South of the country.

They met with the Mayors and other public institutions as a strategy to strengthen UNHCR's work in coordination with local authorities. In Ecuador, most Venezuelans have settled in urban areas, so it is crucial to develop joint responses together with host cities.

UNHCR delivers kits to Venezuelans along the Panamerican Highway



Every day, UNHCR and its partners monitor the Panamerican Highway, the main road used by Venezuelan *walkers* (caminantes) to cross Ecuador. Despite the pandemic and the border closure, Venezuelans keep fleeing their country and entering Ecuador through irregular paths. UNHCR has focused its emergency response at the northern border on this road because it is the most used to cross the country. During monitoring, UNHCR gives them information about access to services, the refugee status determination process in Ecuador, and basic kits containing a thermic blanket, a winterproof sweater, a cap and hygiene items.



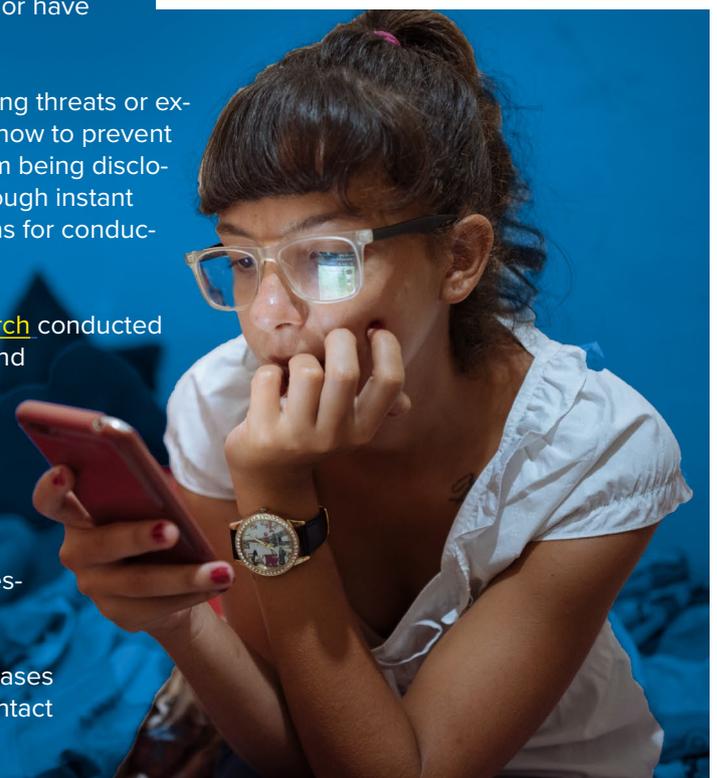
UNHCR and *Taller de Comunicación Mujer* launched the "[Guide for moving safely](#)," a document with information to prevent digital gender violence, focused on the risks to which refugees, migrants, women, and LGBTIQ+ population, who are moving or have recently arrived in Ecuador are exposed.

The Guide provides information on avoiding threats or extortion through social networks or email, how to prevent personal data or intimate information from being disclosed, and how to prevent harassment through instant messaging. Besides, it includes recommendations for conducting safe job searches through the Internet.

The information contained in the guide was based on [research](#) conducted by *Taller Comunicación Mujer*, with the support of UNHCR and Luxembourg. Results show that women and LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants are victims of digital sexual harassment, including sexual extortion and sexual exploitation facilitated by technology. In many cases, this type of violence occurs during jobs and rental online searches. The most common aggressors are known men, such as partners or ex-partners, and people who disguise themselves as employers or processors.

Taller Comunicación Mujer leads a program to accompany cases of digital gender violence. For more information, you can contact them [here](#).

UNHCR launches a guide to prevent digital gender violence



UNHCR supports indigenous Awa's access to higher education



UNHCR and FUDELA donated 11 computers and 30 tablets to indigenous Awa students.

Thanks to the education projects carried out by FUDELA and UNHCR, the Awa indigenous population has become increasingly interested in higher education.

UNHCR has been working with this population for almost 20 years, who have historically lived on both sides of the border between Colombia and Ecuador. Due to the armed conflict and violence by irregular armed groups, many of them sought asylum in Ecuador. Additionally, UNHCR works with the Awa population to prevent statelessness. As they live in remote areas, in some cases they must walk 24 hours to reach the nearest town center, and therefore face barriers to access birth registration and documentation.

Twenty years ago, Awa indigenous families only had access to primary education. The need to generate income meant that many adolescents had to drop out of school to help their parents with their jobs or take care of younger siblings. Two years ago, FUDELA, with UNHCR's support, began providing workshops on the right to education, which was crucial in generating interest in higher education. In August 2020, scholarships were arranged with the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (UTPL) so that the indigenous Awa could study remotely. During the first semester, eleven students received this scholarship and began their studies. Of them, nine have maintained excellent grades during their first semester. At the community level, the impact was so positive that another 23 students applied for these scholarships in February (a 100% increase in just six months).

The Awa population lives in remote areas with little access to the Internet. Therefore, UNHCR and FUDELA have reinforced connectivity and donated computers and tablets to the students. The local government has well-received the project, which has also invested resources to strengthen the community's info center.

Other activities:

Workshops and training:

In Lago Agrio, UNHCR and the Ombudsman's Office facilitated a workshop for 70 Police and Migration officers in Orellana. Subsequent training will follow the virtual and face-to-face schedule of the Police's Comprehensive and Continuous Training Program-PCIC.

In Quito, UNHCR organized the first 2021 training session with Associations of Venezuelans. This cycle of training will take place monthly. It will include information on the refugee status determination procedure and tools for local integration and peaceful coexistence to strengthen these associations' technical capacities.

Access to documentation:

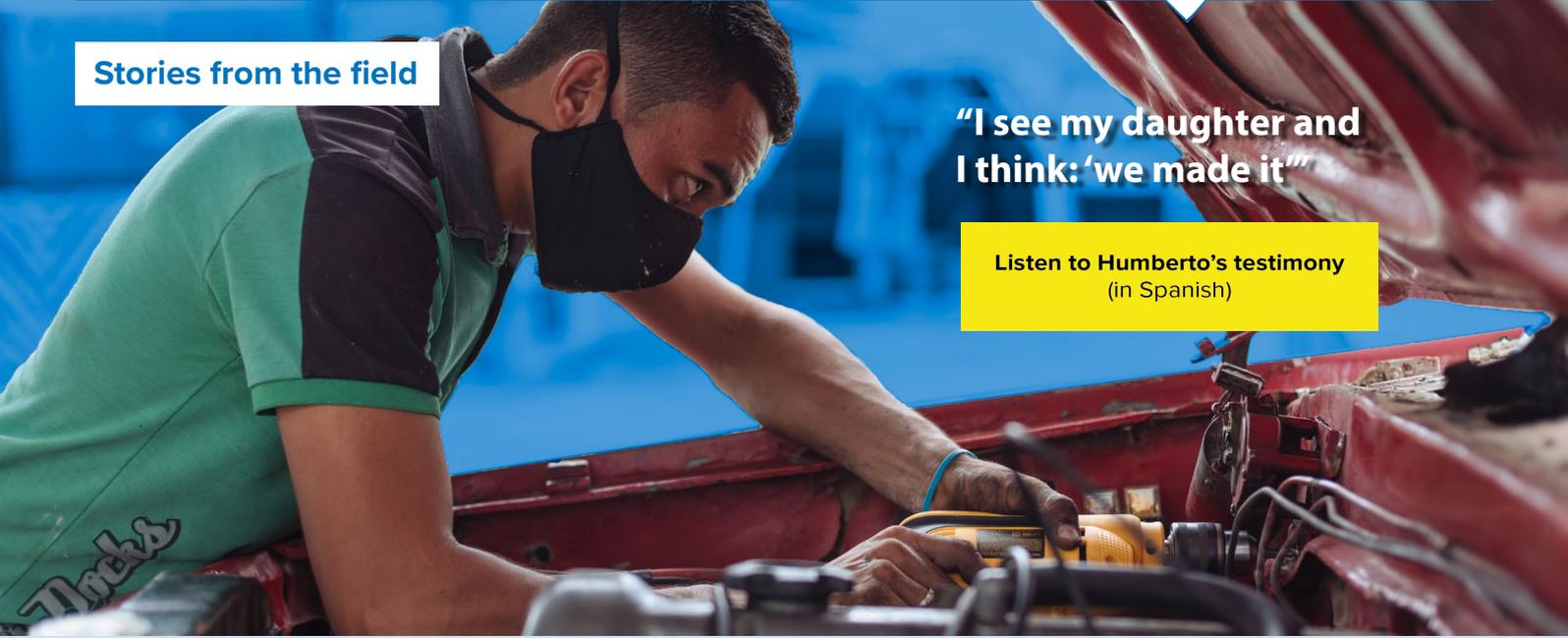
On 17 February, UNHCR and FUDELA visited Lita, Imbabura, to follow up on barriers to access to documentation among the local community and families from Venezuela and Colombia. The rural community faces challenges with connectivity and livelihoods, resulting in obstacles to renewing documents. UNHCR believes that a future Civil Registry brigade in this area could positively impact protection and local integration.

Watch the animated story of Daniel, a Colombian refugee accepted for resettlement



Daniel is a 15-year-old Colombian Refugee whose family was accepted for resettlement. Due to COVID-19, the family hasn't been able to travel. UNHCR's Resettlement Unit has worked on psychological support strategies with families in the resettlement process. For Daniel (the author), writing has been a way of giving hope to his family and others and expressing his feelings.

You may also see the video [here](#).


 Stories from the field

“I see my daughter and I think: ‘we made it’”

Listen to Humberto’s testimony
(in Spanish)

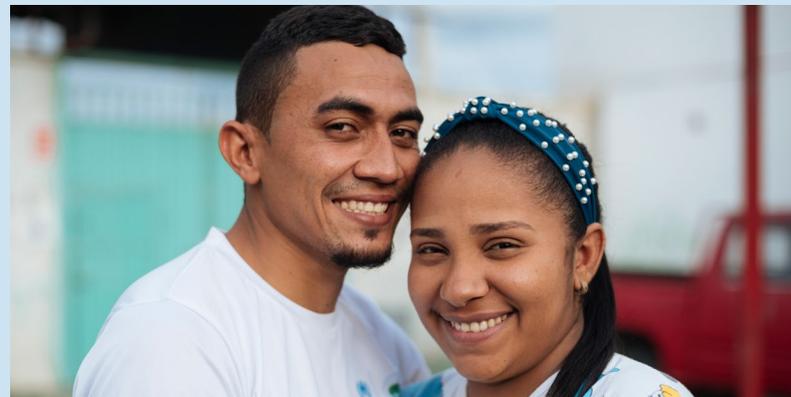
Humberto: the Venezuelan mechanic who restarted his life in Manta

When Humberto was sixteen years old, he had clear priorities: he wanted to finish his studies. To do so, he started working to pay for his studies in his hometown in Venezuela. Three years later, he succeeded. He graduated as a maintenance and industrial mechanics technician.

For eight years he worked hard, started a family and held high-ranking positions in his field of study. Despite having a stable job, the socio-economic crisis in Venezuela was dragging him and his family towards starvation. For this reason, he had no choice but to flee to Ecuador. “Having to leave Venezuela left a big void in my heart,” recalls Humberto, who is now 28 years old.

In mid-2019, he arrived in Manta, a coastal town in Ecuador, where he held multiple jobs: painter, electrician, plumber, bricklayer and, finally, mechanic. During the COVID-19 quarantine, Humberto had a hard time. Not being able to go out to work made him feel helpless and he began to fear for his family’s well-being again. With the support of UNHCR and his partner AVSI,

he joined Construexpress, a ten-hour online workshop on nomenclature and handling of tools, safety and health regulations in construction and construction materials. After the online workshop, he and other 40 participants received eight hour practice lessons for four weeks. This experience, his good relationship with previous clients and the new Ecuadorian friends he made in Manta inspired him to leave the mechanic shop where he worked before to start working on his own. Today, Humberto is succeeding at repairing cars wherever people call him.



We thank the contributions of our donors

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