

22 February - 8 March 2021



Mariángel is a six years old refugee from Venezuela. She and her older sisters are studying from home thanks to UNHCR's support. Read her story at page 4.

Figures at a glance

70.246

people have been recognized as refugees, 97% are Colombian

443.705

Venezuelans are currently living in Ecuador.

7%

of financial requirements have been funded

Our response in 2021 in figures

1 January - to date



7

RHUs installed to serve as triage and pre hospitalization areas.



2.855

Hygiene kits delivered to population of concern



218.958

messages sent to population of concern through UNHCR's WhatsApp chatbot (from 1 November)



36

hand washing stations installed in strategic points nationwide

Operational context

COVID-19: Confirmed cases have surpassed 300.000 nationwide. Ecuador's Ministry of Public Health created a website to release the vaccination plan, aiming to vaccinate 60% of the population in four phases. The platform allows for people included in phase one (health personnel, older persons (>65), public security staff, professors, persons with disabilities, waste recyclers) to register for obtaining a vaccination date. Recognized refugees holding an Ecuadorian ID-card will be able to register, but there are concerns that the hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers and Venezuelans with irregular migratory status may be excluded.

POPULATION MOVEMENTS: UNHCR and partners identify 500 - 600 Venezuelan caminantes entering daily through visible paths during working hours, although numbers might be higher as many cross the border in private transport at night. Additionally, 44 Haitians arrived in Ecuador from Brazil and Perú through the Tiputini river (Amazon region) and then went to Orellana. Local authorities and humanitarian

organizations provided shelter, food, and other basic needs. UNHCR is in contact with the group, and they intend to reach North America.

PROTECTION CONCERNS: The security situation at the northern border has deteriorated. Community leaders informed UNHCR that the presence of Colombian irregular groups has increased. As a consequence, an "informal" curfew applies at 6:00 p.m. in some communities. In Esmeraldas and Sucumbíos, Ecuadorian armed forces have discovered a clandestine drug laboratory, coca plantations, firearms and ammunition. This has generated fear and internal displacement.

Xenophobia against Venezuelan refugees and migrants is increasing. Near Otavalo, community leaders requested the eviction of 34 Venezuelans due to alleged increased criminality. In Tulcán, the high number of families with children sleeping on the streets continues to cause complaints among the host community, who have also asked for humanitarian organizations to relocate.

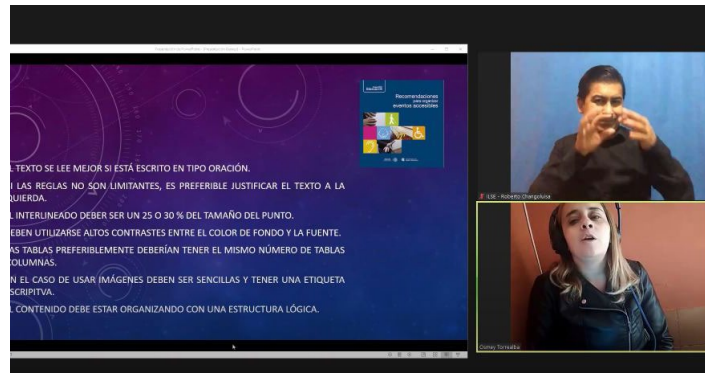
UNHCR donates furniture to shelters for children survivors of gender based violence



To support the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion efforts in the protection of children and adolescents, UNHCR donated beds, sheets, a washing machine, TVs, and other equipment to support ‘Dueña de Mi’ and ‘Casa Linda,’ two safe spaces for 50 sexual and gender based violence survivors. In these shelters, refugee and Ecuadorian women and girls receive food, psychological support, health services and education.

Materials were donated during a formal event held together with the the Minister of Economic and Social Inclusion Vicente Taiano. During the coming months, UNHCR will their their sheters’ staff on international protection.

UNHCR and RIADIS train on accessible communication for people with disabilities



UNHCR Ecuador and the Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families (RIADIS) organized four webinars for communication colleagues from Ecuador, Latinamerica and HQ on promoting inclusive and accessible communication for persons with disabilities. All webinars were simultaneously translated using sign language.

Recordings of sessions are available through these links: [Webinar 1: Accessible Audiovisual Communications](#), [Webinar 2: Accessible Information for persons with Visual Disabilities](#), [Webinar 3: Easy-to-Read Information for Persons with Intellectual Disability](#), [Webinar 4: Accessible Webpages](#)



UNHCR supports more than 130 wifi spots to facilitate online education

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of connectivity to access information and services, especially distance education. For this reason UNHCR, together with local authorities, installed free internet spots in public spaces in the provinces of Pichincha, Carchi and Imbabura.

The WIFI networks are benefitting more than 130,000 Ecuadorians and refugees. Their main objective is to facilitate access to online education In addition, they allow refugees and Ecuadorians to continue accessing services that are now provided virtually, including the process for seeking asylum or registering for the vaccination plan.

Enter [here](#) to know the wifi spots location.

In the picture: refugee girls in Pimampiro receive online classes thanks to the wifi spot installed in the community's football court.

UNHCR supports safe spaces for refugee and Ecuadorian sex workers



UNHCR supported the opening of La Salita, a community center for refugee and Ecuadorian sex workers in Machala. The space is administrated by PLAPERTS, the Latin American Platform of Sex Workers, and Flor de Azalea, a community-based organization supporting sex workers and promoting women’s rights. This space will host community meetings and activities focusing on strengthening peer support networks, prevention and response to HIV and other sexual transmitted infections, protection against gender based violence, among other topics.

UNHCR has been actively engaging with PLAPERTS and Flor de Azalea. In 2020, in the framework of HIV funds, the operation supported a activities with both organizations, including donations for the establishment of this new space, access to livelihood activities, and institutional strengthening through capacity building, regularization, and support to health promoters in partnership with CARE.

UNHCR strenghtens community leaders’ knowledge on communication

In December 2020, UNHCR Ecuador supported a group of community leaders to develop their community journalism skills and improve their engagement with Communication with Communities activities. After receiving training on storytelling, video and podcast production from Radio Cocoa, participants were invited to present communication project proposals to be funded by UNHCR.

Three projects were selected and were now published. Results are available here:

[Documentary: Positive stories of refugees and migrants](#)

[Animated story: What is wrong with mom and dad?](#)

[Facebook Information Page: Lifes crossing borders](#)



UNHCR commemorates International Women’s Day through art

In Esmeraldas, UNHCR and Cantonal Gender Committee launched the Art Virtual Event **“Festiarte, our voices for gender equality.”** In Quito, the Frente Unido de Mujeres de Turubamba renovated the image of its headquarters with a mural created by refugee women, La Changa Popular Arts Collective and UNHCR. In Ambato, Guayaquil and Pimampiro murals were also painted in commemoration of International women’s Day.

Moreover, in Lago Agrio, UNHCR coordinated radio conversations in Radio Sucumbíos with organizations from Lago Agrio’s SGBV Roundtable and refugee businesswomen, sharing associative business and other livelihoods strategies.



Stories from the field



Marcela, Miranda and Mariangel are studying online thanks to UNHCR's support

In the small apartment where they live in Quito, Marcela (10), Miranda (8) and Mariángel (6) play with a dollhouse that they built during the pandemic. However, when they have to attend their virtual classes, they put their toys aside to focus on learning. Thanks to UNHCR and their partner FUDELA, they have been able to continue studying from home.

Before receiving the tablets, the three girls had to share a single cell phone to do their homework, which made learning very difficult. Additionally, the family had to pay a neighbour for using their wifi, which was not always possible due to lack of income. Now they can do it easily thanks to the UNHCR-funded internet plan included in the tablets.

"It has been an essential support for the girls. Now they are up to date with their learning and they have very good grades. We are very proud of them," Jhoan, the sisters' father says.

Their mother Arisneli works as a secretary in a clinic, while Jhoan sells empanadas on the street. Arisneli's salary has allowed the family to pay the rent of the apartment where they live.

The family fled Venezuela due to widespread violence and lack of basic services. They settled in Quito, where they had to overcome many difficulties, but now they feel safe. Although they barely leave the house to prevent contracting the virus, on weekends they go for a walk at the park close to their home.



We thank the contributions of our donors

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