



UNHCR's presence in 2012	
Number of offices	6
Total staff	83
International staff	11
National staff	46
JPO staff	1
UNVs	19
Others	6

Partners

Implementing partners

Government agencies: Refugee Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Integration; Ombudsman's Office

NGOs: *Comité Permanente de Derechos Humanos, CONFIE, Cooperación de Mujer a Mujer, Fedarpom San Lorenzo, Federación de Mujeres de Sucumbíos, Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progresso, Fundación Alberto Labaka, Fundación Ambiente y Sociedad, Fundación Nuestros Jóvenes, Fundación Tarabita, Hebrew Immigration and Aid Society, Jesuit Refugee Services, Misión Scalabriniana, Oxfam Italy*

Operational partners

Government agencies: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, and local municipalities

NGOs: NRC

Others: IOM, OHCHR, PAHO, UN Women, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP

| Overview |

Operational highlights

- UNHCR launched a comprehensive solutions strategy focused on regularization and local integration.
- Community-based interventions benefited refugees and local communities alike.
- UNHCR redirected its urban refugee policy to give priority to outreach and livelihoods interventions.
- A reinforced system of safe houses strengthened efforts to counter sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).
- The applications of more than 1,600 refugees were submitted for resettlement to third countries.

People of concern

At the end of 2012 Ecuador hosted some 55,500 refugees, with more than half this number recognized during the enhanced registration exercise conducted in 2009 and 2010. Almost all of the refugees originate from Colombia.

Type of Population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Colombia	54,600	54,600	48	23
	Various	900	900	35	8
People in a refugee-like situation	Colombia	68,300	-	-	-
Asylum-seekers	Colombia	14,400	14,400	48	29
	Various	160	160	19	8
Total		138,360	70,060		

| Report on 2012 results |

Achievements and impact

Favourable protection environment

- Ecuador received more than 1,000 asylum claims per month in 2012 and remains the country hosting the largest population of refugees in Latin America. The large number of people arriving and seeking refuge within the country has affected the international protection regime in the country and led the Government to implement a new, more restrictive Refugee Decree. As a result, access to asylum has become more difficult and some 30 per cent of applications were not accepted, creating a growing group of people without documentation.

Basic needs and services

- The continuous arrival of people in need of international protection (more than 1,000 people per month) required the operation to establish shelters in the border areas for asylum-seekers.
- Added efforts were made to reduce drop-out rates from primary and secondary education resulting primarily from bullying in schools of Colombian children of concern.
- The delivery of humanitarian assistance in the form of food and non-food vouchers was coordinated with WFP and other partners. A study confirmed the positive impact of the voucher system on the lives of individuals in need of international protection. Groups with special needs obtained additional support from a wide range of UNHCR partners. For example, the operation supported 313 SGBV survivors with a network of five safe houses throughout the country.

Fair protection processes and documentation

- UNHCR's comprehensive solutions strategy to address the protracted refugee situation in Ecuador gave priority to providing already recognized refugees with better documentation and opportunities to regularize their stay by means of residence permits or naturalization.

Durable solutions

- Due to the more restrictive new asylum regime in Ecuador, resettlement gained importance. The number of candidates submitted for resettlement doubled from some 800 in 2011 to more than 1,600 in 2012 – 22 per cent of whom were women and children at risk.

- UNHCR's border-monitoring activities and protection through presence assisted people in need of international protection, while small-scale community projects promoted peaceful coexistence. Cross-border coordination with UNHCR offices in Colombia, from where almost all the refugees in Ecuador originate, allowed the operation to gain first-hand country-of-origin information. Less than 7 per cent of the population of refugees in Ecuador are interested in voluntary repatriation, according to a study by the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences in Ecuador.
- With more than 70 per cent of the refugees in Ecuador residing in cities, UNHCR strengthened implementation of its urban refugee policy and cooperated with other stakeholders to reach the often dispersed population. Community outreach interventions enhanced communication with people in need of international protection in order to fine-tune interventions and to support individual cases with their legal status in Ecuador. With more attention given to livelihood projects, 10 per cent of the refugee population were able to reach higher levels of self-reliance.

Security from violence and exploitation

- In coordination with various child protection partners, Best Interest Determination (BID) procedures were put in place. BIDs were undertaken and follow-up with professional institutions was organized for 41 of the 48 identified unaccompanied or separated children.
- Additional efforts were made to address SGBV, which affects a large number of refugee women. A network of safe houses supported by UNHCR improved services for survivors of SGBV. The houses also adopted a joint methodology to address SGBV, and two new houses are under construction.
- Refugees in Ecuador suffer high levels of discrimination. To address the problem, UNHCR raised awareness of the issue among journalists and government authorities. These efforts were also directed toward dispelling the common belief that Colombian refugees are associated with violence and the drug trade.

Assessment of results

Despite the tightening of the asylum regime, UNHCR was able to monitor the complex protection situation along the border with Colombia and in large urban centres across the country. However, delivery of humanitarian assistance and protection to asylum-seekers became more challenging. To respond, UNHCR

adopted new ways of working and coordinating activities with a wider range of stakeholders and partners. Furthermore, UNHCR undertook a study on the impact of the new, more restrictive asylum rules on refugee protection.

Even though progress was made against the Global Strategic Priorities, such as the registration of individual refugees and the pursuit of local integration, many challenges remain in bridging the gap between local action and national policies to improve the daily life of refugees. The Comprehensive Solutions Strategy for the country will need refinement in areas including naturalization and status regularization.

Constraints

Refugee issues are often associated with questions of national security in Ecuador. Negative public perceptions of refugees and the adoption of the new Refugee Decree have made it more difficult for people of concern to gain access to asylum. Moreover, the regional context remains complex. Though peace talks between the Colombian Government and the FARC rebel group have raised hopes, questions remain about the feasibility

of voluntary repatriation. The Colombian conflict continues to affect security in northern Ecuador.

Unmet needs

- The assistance voucher could not be increased from USD 80 to USD 100, affecting some 4,000 of the most vulnerable refugees or asylum-seekers.
- Livelihood projects, such as employment schemes and micro-credit projects, could not be expanded, leaving some 10 per cent of the refugee population without self-reliance support.
- Community outreach to urban refugees, deemed a priority by the Urban Refugee Steering Group, could not be reinforced. The network of community workers could not be supported with small stipends, making their work more difficult.
- Limited funding prevented the effective pursuit of comprehensive solutions strategies, including recommendations by the Urban Refugee Steering Group, self-sufficiency and livelihoods, local integration and naturalization.

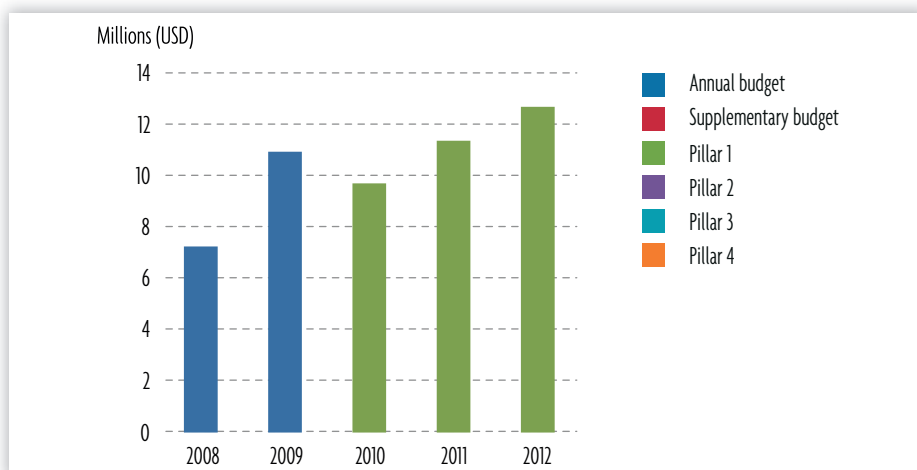
Working with others

- UNHCR worked with 16 partners in Ecuador.
- The UNHCR-led protection network included the NRC, WFP, UNFPA, UNDP, OHCHR, IOM, and universities. Inter-agency coordination and joint missions helped in addressing needs in the northern border area, which was affected by floods in 2012.

Financial information

Expenditures for Ecuador | 2008 to 2012

The financial requirements for UNHCR's operation in Ecuador amounted to some USD 21 million in 2012, and available funding allowed the operation to expend USD 12.7million. As the financial resources for the Ecuador operation were limited, some costs were reduced through staff cuts and administrative measures during the year.



Budget, income and expenditure in Ecuador | USD

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	Total
FINAL BUDGET	21,100,405	21,100,405
Income from contributions ¹	3,479,504	3,479,504
Other funds available / adjustments / transfers	9,213,589	9,213,589
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	12,693,093	12,693,093

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	Total
EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN		
<i>Favourable Protection Environment</i>		
International and regional instruments	58,565	58,565
Law and policy	306,266	306,266
Access to legal assistance and remedies	414,616	414,616
Access to territory and refoulement risk reduced	133,317	133,317
Public attitude towards persons of concern	462,330	462,330
Subtotal	1,375,094	1,375,094
<i>Fair Protection Processes and Documentation</i>		
Registration and profiling	636,105	636,105
Status determination procedures	820,247	820,247
Individual documentation	209,953	209,953
Subtotal	1,666,305	1,666,305
<i>Security from Violence and Exploitation</i>		
Protection from effects of armed conflict	332,839	332,839
Prevention and response to SGBV	1,301,062	1,301,062
Freedom of movement and detention risk reduced	58,565	58,565
Protection of children	494,918	494,918
Subtotal	2,187,384	2,187,384
<i>Basic Needs and Essential Services</i>		
Health	199,429	199,429
Reproductive health and HIV services	91,362	91,362
Water	134,408	134,408
Shelter and infrastructure	412,921	412,921
Basic and domestic items	232,768	232,768
Services for people with specific needs	444,257	444,257
Education	1,086,556	1,086,556
Subtotal	2,601,702	2,601,702
<i>Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance</i>		
Community mobilization	536,708	536,708
Coexistence with local communities	363,155	363,155
Self-reliance and livelihoods	760,996	760,996
Subtotal	1,660,859	1,660,859
<i>Durable Solutions</i>		
Voluntary return	143,833	143,833
Resettlement	206,901	206,901
Subtotal	350,734	350,734
<i>Leadership, Coordination and Partnerships</i>		
Coordination and partnerships	58,565	58,565
Donor relations and resource mobilization	127,681	127,681
Subtotal	186,246	186,246
<i>Logistics and Operations Support</i>		
Operations management, coordination and support	1,057,831	1,057,831
Subtotal	1,057,831	1,057,831
Balance of instalments with implementing partners	1,606,938	1,606,938
Total	12,693,093	12,693,093

Income from contributions includes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions to Pillars 3 and 4, supplementary budgets and the "New or additional activities – mandate-related" (NAM) Reserve. Contributions towards all pillars are included under Pillar 1.