

ECUADOR

Operational highlights

- The magnitude of international protection needs in Ecuador has changed drastically in the last decade. While in 2000 there were only 390 recognized refugees in the country, at the end of 2010 there were some 53,000.
- UNHCR assisted the Government of Ecuador to conduct the final phase of the Enhanced Registration project for Colombians in need of international protection. As a result, almost 8,000 people were recognized as refugees during the course of 2010.
- More than 1,000 people were presented to third countries for resettlement in 2010.
- Some 50 community projects benefited a total of 110,000 people, including refugees and members of host communities.
- Approximately 8,700 families (comprising some 43,500 people) benefited from shelter materials, non-food items and health and sanitary kits provided by UNHCR.

Working environment

Ecuador is host to the highest number of refugees in Latin America, and their number continues to increase. The vast majority (98 per cent) are Colombians who have fled their country over the past decade. As of December 2010, of the 53,300 refugees in Ecuador, almost 28,000 had been recognized through the Enhanced Registration process run by the Government and UNHCR up to March 2010. This registration operation represented a major development in the protection of refugees in the region, and helped to identify protection concerns specific to Ecuador.



Today, UNHCR is present in all of Ecuador's northern border provinces, providing protection and working with local authorities and communities to expand local integration.

Persons of concern

Type of Population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Colombia	52,100	49,000	48	26
	Various	800	800	34	9
People in a refugee-like situation	Colombia	68,300	3,000	-	-
Asylum-seekers	Colombia	39,700	39,700	46	24
	Peru	4,400	4,400	24	6
	Cuba	3,500	3,500	30	0
	Haiti	600	600	28	4
	Pakistan	270	270	2	4
	Nigeria	240	240	7	1
	Bangladesh	160	160	1	3
	Various	900	900	22	9
Total		170,970	102,570		

The Governments of Colombia and Ecuador have restored diplomatic relations. Both Governments have reiterated their interest in establishing a coordination mechanism to address—together with UNHCR—the situation of Colombian refugees in Ecuador. A multilateral commission has been preparing a proposal for possible repatriation movements.

| Achievements and impact |

● *Activities and assistance*

Favourable protection environment

- People of concern to UNHCR were included in national development policies. Border monitoring was ensured in the three northern border provinces of Esmeraldas, Carchi and Sucumbíos. Some 90 per cent of cases of threatened *refoulement* were prevented. During the last half of 2010, UNHCR noted an increase in the number of Colombian irregular armed groups operating in urban centres, notably Quito and Guayaquil, and as a consequence, 242 people were relocated within the country for their security. UNHCR provided them with transportation, shelter, humanitarian assistance and referrals for resettlement.

Fair protection processes

- Legal-assistance mechanisms were strengthened through close collaboration between UNHCR and Ecuador's Ombudsman's Office, and material and equipment were provided in Quito, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Cuenca and Guayaquil. Municipal services offering legal aid to refugees in Quito and Cuenca were also reinforced. Three Human Mobility Houses in Quito and one in Cuenca were opened. Five legal clinics, three in Quito and one each in Tsáchilas and Ibarra, were strengthened.
- The Enhanced Registration Project was completed at the end of March 2010 in the provinces of Carchi and Imbabura. As a result, other 6,400 people were recognized as refugees, and 1,330 people with specific protection needs were identified and assisted. For example, nine torture victims were provided with specialized assistance, and 67 unaccompanied minors received legal and psychological counselling.

Security from violence and exploitation

- Approximately 470 victims of torture and domestic or sexual violence received counselling and were referred to specialized institutions for support.
- Other activities included protection interventions and referrals, workshops and training sessions on sexual and reproductive health, and the creation of women's networks. Improvements were made to four health sub-centres in Sucumbíos and Orellana provinces to assist survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. The women's centres conducted 25 sessions on sexual and reproductive health.

Basic needs and services

- Some 3,720 new asylum-seekers participated in orientation workshops. UNHCR provided shelter,

treatment and follow-up for 120 unaccompanied minors. Humanitarian assistance programmes for vulnerable families and new arrivals benefited over 8,700 families. Moreover, 83 per cent of refugees with psychosocial needs were assisted to improve their self-sufficiency. A total of 533 refugee minors, victims of torture or sexual violence received specialized medical attention, psychosocial support and legal counselling.

- During the year 554 children received school materials and uniforms. Twenty-five workshops on education-related topics were conducted for children, adolescents, teachers and parents, while 37 DAFI scholarships were awarded. However, owing to resource limitations, support for centres for unaccompanied and separated children could not be provided.

Community participation and self-management

- At least 620 refugees and asylum-seekers, 68 per cent of them female-headed households, benefited from in-kind grants. There are 7 different revolving credit funds promoted by UNHCR, six of them initiated in 2009 and the other started in 2010. 1,144 credits have been granted in 2010 and some 60% of their beneficiaries have received capacity training on micro-credit. Some 5,650 people were provided with information on the labour market, while 1,250 people of concern were able to find legal work.

Durable solutions

- Resettlement was used as a protection tool, adapted to the specific protection needs of refugees. More than 1,000 people were referred for resettlement and 380 were resettled in third countries.

External relations

- Following an increase of xenophobia and discrimination directed at people of other nationalities, particularly displaced Colombians, UNHCR focused its public-information strategy on sensitizing the public to the needs of refugees. Two campaigns against xenophobia targeted broad public opinion. Engagement with the media was strengthened and six training workshops for journalists were held across the country.

Logistics and operations support

- UNHCR ran 7 offices, of which some are in remote locations; developed partnerships with local actors; worked to put in place security measures and conducted monitoring and assessment missions.

| Constraints |

Although the Government has reinforced its military presence in the border regions, the deterioration of the internal conflict in Colombia and the fragile security situation in bordering communities continue to be a major concern for UNHCR, as they affect staff safety and project implementation, ultimately resulting in the shrinking of humanitarian space.

A Colombian refugee, who recently received refugee status, has been building a new life in Ecuador.



UNHCR / J. BJÖRGE/INSSON

In addition to the general insecurity, the concentration of large numbers of Colombian asylum-seekers and refugees in a few areas and cities on the northern border of Ecuador has generated negative feelings towards this group. Although the situation is not yet out of control, it is of concern as it could easily deteriorate.

Financial information

Gaps in funding had a seriously effect on the Office's ability to provide support for safe houses for victims of sexual violence and on activities aimed at countering human trafficking and smuggling. With the funding available it was not possible to strengthen microcredit programmes. In addition, several sanitation projects involving the construction of latrines, garbage collection and the installation of potable-water systems could not be implemented.

Organization and implementation

UNHCR's presence in Ecuador covered the nine provinces with the most refugees through offices in Quito, Ibarra, Lago Agrío and Esmeraldas, and through field outposts in Cuenca and Santo Domingo. UNHCR also has a field unit in Quito that seeks solutions for the urban refugee population in that city, as well as in Cuenca and Guayaquil. Due to the increase in the number of asylum-seekers from Colombia, UNHCR opened a field office in Tulcan.

UNHCR's presence in 2010

□ Number of offices	7
□ Total staff	91
International	10
National	32
JPOs	4
UNVs	45

Working with others

UNHCR continued to support the Government and coordinated with a wide range of institutions. Integration activities in the northern border area were included in local development programmes, and UNHCR continued to lead the 16-agency UN Northern Border Inter-Agency Working Group. Within the United Nations Development Assistance (UNDAF) framework, UNHCR and its partners developed new initiatives to support host communities and address specific protection concerns, such as gender-based violence.

Overall assessment

The finalizing of the Enhanced Registration project was the most visible and value-added exercise in Ecuador in 2010, and receiving strong support from the Ecuadorian Government. As a result of this project, 27,740 refugees were recognized during the 2009 – 2010 period. The programme also strengthened the regular registration and recognition mechanisms of the General Directorate for Refugees

UNHCR reaped the benefits of its close coordination with municipalities and local governments, which helped to implement local-integration projects for both Ecuadorian and Colombian populations in host communities. The projects aimed at strengthening water services, education and the self-reliance of the refugee population. Water-collection systems constructed among northern border host communities have served both as emergency and development initiatives. Not only they have helped alleviate immediate needs, but they have also improved the health of populations living by polluted rivers.

Finally, UNHCR has strengthened its cooperation with the armed forces and the police, particularly by training their personnel, which in turn has improved coordination with the authorities who are in regular contact with refugees throughout the country.

Partners

Implementing partners

NGOs: *Comite Pro Refugiados, Consejo Gubernativo de Bienes Diocesanos de la Diócesis de Tulcán, COOPI, Ecuadorian Red Cross, Federación de Artesanos Recolectores de Productos Bioacuáticos del Manglar, Federación de Mujeres de Sucumbios, Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio, Fundación Ambiente y Sociedad, Fundación Solidaridad Humana adscrita a la Pastoral de Esmeraldas, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, ISAMIS (orden Carmelitas Descalzos), Jesuit Refugee Service, OXFAM Italy*

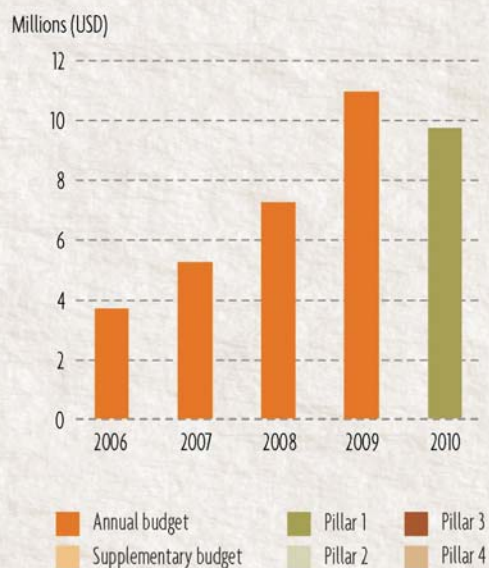
Others: United Nations Volunteers

Operational partners

Government agencies: General Directorate for Refugees - Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Others: IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WFP

Expenditure in Ecuador 2006 - 2010



Budget, income and expenditure in Ecuador | USD

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	Total
FINAL BUDGET	16,456,121	25,000	16,481,121
Income from contributions ¹	4,480,321	0	4,480,321
Other funds available	5,230,463	0	5,230,463
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	9,710,784	0	9,710,784

EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN

Favourable protection environment

National legal framework	81,075	0	81,075
Co-operation with partners	137,715	0	137,715
National development policies	91,341	0	91,341
Non-refoulement	174,923	0	174,923
Subtotal	485,055	0	485,055

Fair protection processes and documentation

Access to asylum procedures	748,851	0	748,851
Fair and efficient status determination	1,020,375	0	1,020,375
Subtotal	1,769,226	0	1,769,226

Security from violence and exploitation

Impact on host communities	2,333	0	2,333
Gender-based violence	196,603	0	196,603
Protection of children	126,515	0	126,515
Subtotal	325,451	0	325,451

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	Total
<i>Basic needs and essential services</i>			
Food security	122,040	0	122,040
Water	179,203	0	179,203
Shelter and other infrastructure	371,629	0	371,629
Basic domestic and hygiene items	106,392	0	106,392
Primary health care	229,802	0	229,802
Education	403,335	0	403,335
Sanitation services	66,631	0	66,631
Services for groups with specific needs	808,836	0	808,836
Subtotal	2,287,867	0	2,287,867
<i>Community participation and self-management</i>			
Community self-management and equal representation	811,776	0	811,776
Self-reliance and livelihoods	567,118	0	567,118
Subtotal	1,378,894	0	1,378,894
<i>Durable solutions</i>			
Resettlement	453,244	0	453,244
Local integration support	144,701	0	144,701
Subtotal	597,945	0	597,945
<i>External relations</i>			
Resource mobilisation	138,571	0	138,571
Public information	298,384	0	298,384
Subtotal	436,955	0	436,955
<i>Logistics and operations support</i>			
Supply chain and logistics	607,263	0	607,263
Programme management, coordination and support	1,107,663	0	1,107,663
Subtotal	1,714,927	0	1,714,927
Instalments to implementing partners	714,464	0	714,464
Total	9,710,784	0	9,710,784

¹ 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.