

# NRC's operations in **Colombia, Ecuador and Panama**

## Humanitarian overview

According to the UN there are 12 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in Colombia, Ecuador and Panama. The increase in violence and conflict in Colombia in 2021, the continued and unprecedented migration from Venezuela and the effects of the pandemic, disasters, and climate change have increased the number of people in need.

Despite the hopes of the Peace Agreement – signed between the Government and FARC-EP in 2016 seeking an end to the 42 years of conflict – peace has not reached Colombia. Through 2021, the number of forcibly displaced people almost tripled compared to 2020. At the same time Colombians continue fleeing the country to seek international protection in, among others, Ecuador and Panama.

Additionally, Colombia, Ecuador and Panama host around 2.3 million people who have fled from the growing humanitarian situation in Venezuela. The Covid-19 pandemic has hit Venezuelans displaced abroad and host communities hard, exacerbating needs and entrenching poverty even further. Humanitarian needs and human rights violations have also increased as a consequence of the recent unprecedented surge of mixed flows of migrants through informal border crossings in Ecuador, Colombia and Panama.

## NRC's operation

In Colombia we help IDPs in hard-to-reach areas where authorities struggle to protect civilians and provide help. Despite the ongoing conflict, we also contribute to the process of reintegration of former combatants into civilian life and promote reconciliation processes in territories affected by violence. We also help Colombians in need of international protection in Ecuador and Panama.

The crisis in Venezuela means that many people are seeking humanitarian aid in other countries. We are implementing a multi-country Colombia-Panama-Ecuador action plan to respond. NRC is also currently assisting Venezuelan migrants and refugees in Peru through our partner Encuentros – Servicio Jesuita de Solidaridad

### NRC Colombia, Ecuador & Panama

Established	1991
International staff	9
National staff	731



## NRC Colombia, Ecuador and Panama

### Country office

Bogotá



### Areas of operation

**Colombia:** Arauca, Bogota, Buenaventura, Cali, Cucuta, Florencia, Guapi, Ipiales, Maicao, Medellin, Ocaña, Pasto, Popayan, Puerto Asis, Quibdo, Riohacha, San Jose del Guaviare, Santa Marta, Tumaco and Villavicencio. **Ecuador:** Ambato, Cuenca, Esmeraldas, Francisco de Orellana, Guayaquil, Huaquillas, Ibarra, Julio Andrade, Lago Agrio, Machala, Maná, Quito, San Lorenzo, Santo Domingo **Panama:** Panama city, Pinogana, Chiriqui. **Perú:** Lima, Piura, Tumbes.

### NRC Colombia

Country director: Dominika Arseniuk

Email: [co.nrc@nrc.no](mailto:co.nrc@nrc.no)

Phone: +51 1 3171481

[www.nrc.no/colombia](http://www.nrc.no/colombia)

Address: Carrera 12a #78-40

### Protection from violence

We analyse protection risks in the contexts where we work and the actors available to address these. We respond with protection programming, advocacy or partnerships that ensure displacement-affected people are safe and protected from forced displacement, threats, killings, physical assault, discrimination, abuse, harassment, forced recruitment and gender-based violence. In the region, NRC delivers specialised protection services including case management and individual protection assistance where other services are limited or unable to adequately reduce protection risks. We work with displaced and host communities to design programmes that promote safety and reduce risks as consequence of the armed conflict in Colombia as well as the economic and political crisis in Venezuela.

### Education

We help displaced, migrant and refugee families keep their children in school, and work with youth and adults so they can complete their education and find

safe vocational training opportunities. We continue to work with schools to reach people with educational materials and kits, identify challenges and solutions to ensure continuity of education and ensure those who are out of school are not neglected.

### Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)

Our ICLA team provides reliable and up-to-date legal services on access to documentation, access to the refugee status procedure, and other regularisation mechanisms. We also provide legal services to claim or exercise rights that are denied or violated for refugees and migrants. These populations face particular challenges in enjoying their housing rights. So, we work with justice mechanisms – traditional, state-based and collaborative resolution mechanisms - to help prevent evictions and collaboratively resolve disputes.

### Shelter and settlements

Access to shelter is essential for one's dignity, privacy, health, and physical and social protection. Our shelter and settlements teams provide access to adequate shelter solutions for affected people across all phases of displacement. This ranges from rapidly deployable emergency shelter solutions that can save lives, to supporting early recovery and promoting durable solutions.

### Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH)

Without sufficient safe water for drinking and personal hygiene, it is difficult to stay healthy and combat the pandemic. We provide infrastructure and equipment for water and water treatment, as well as hygiene and sanitation kits. We also teach good hygiene practices and we help displaced, migrants and refugee families to achieve better living conditions.

### Livelihoods and food security

When displaced people, migrants or refugees do not have access to food supplies, NRC provides food assistance. We promote livelihood strategies that protect, restart, and strengthen the ability of individuals and households to earn a living. The inclusion of host communities in this response is key to preventing discrimination and xenophobia.

### Cash transfers

In times of crisis, cash-based humanitarian assistance enables people in need to buy food, hygiene products or pay rent. We make electronic transfers through different means (such as smartphones or electronic payment cards) to displaced people and host communities. We also provide vouchers, coupons or cards that can be exchanged for a specific amount of goods and services.

### Emergency response

When a new emergency arises, we provide humanitarian assistance to communities where no permanent field presence has yet been or can be established. We are present in border areas where migrants and refugees need assistance. We provide food, water, hygiene kits, legal assistance, protection and promote access to temporary shelter. We also help displaced, migrant and refugee children to go to safe learning environments during acute emergencies.

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Humanitarian Aid



USAID  
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The LEGO Foundation

The United States Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM)

The World Food Programme (WFP)

Norwegian Embassy

The United Nations Peace-Building Fund (UN PBF)

Education Cannot Wait (ECW) - UNICEF

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The Colombian Ministry of Education (MoE)

Pluralsight