

GRADUATION MODEL ECUADOR

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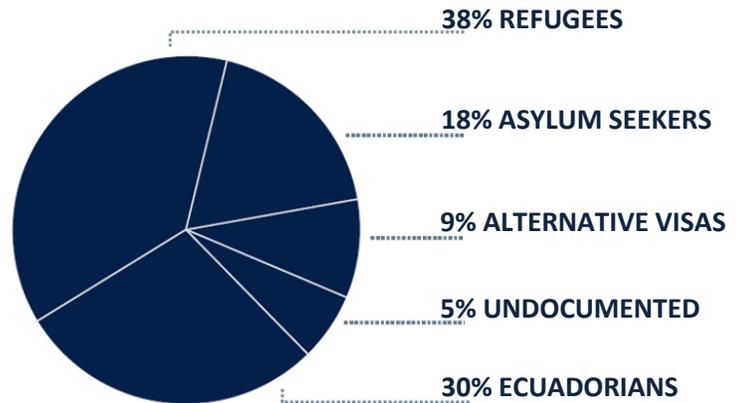
Each month, Ecuador receives approximately 900 asylum claims, with an estimated 60% of the population of interest primarily scattered within urban zones such as Santo Domingo de los Tsachilas. Refugees in Ecuador often struggle to attain prospects for sustainable and dignified livelihoods. In particular, many suffer from underemployment for lack of proper documentation, poor awareness of employment and opportunities, and difficulty re-establishing social capital away from their country of origin. Forcibly displaced people nevertheless carry something of considerable value: their knowledge, skills and experience' most have the potential to become self-reliant.

In line with its commitment to finding durable solutions for displaced populations by linking them to existing services and mechanisms, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and partner HIAS-with technical support from BRAC and Trickle Up, in January 2015, officially launched the Graduation Model in the bustling commercial hub of Santo Domingo, Ecuador, a smaller yet still vibrantly active periurban city a few short hours from Quito in order for it to serve as a pilot before expanding the approach to other parts of the country. This pilot in Ecuador, is one of the three countries currently applying the Graduation Approach among refugee populations.



The Graduation Model is composed of both innovative elements in line with the necessities with the Ecuadorian context and the five core building blocks of the Graduation Approach: a well targeted selection, consumption support, savings, assets transfer, and skills training. By equipping each household with the skills and means for income generation to break the cycle of dependency on outside assistance and resources, the stepwise approach of the project is designed to create a self-sustaining safety net to lift some 200 poor refugee and Ecuadorian families from their current level of poverty to improved conditions and more stable livelihoods.

FAMILIES IMMIGRATION STATUS



INNOVATIVE ELEMENTS

TABLET-BASED DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM: Data collection is simplified and enhanced to include uploading GPS coordinates, photos and videos and avoiding transcribing information to the computer for data management and processing purposes. Tablet-based data collection systems are significantly time and cost saving, and they reduce the risk of errors.

BI-WEEKLY VISITS FROM MENTORS: Home visits ensure a mentor accompanies each family through the process. Mentors serve to identify possible pitfalls and warning flags, and to steer each family to specific interventions as necessary, thus maximizing on potential for long-term success of the Graduation Approach. They also allow for a better tracking of the participants' movements, especially since refugee households show high levels of mobility within the city.



FAMILY UNIT AS THE OBJECT OF INTERVENTION: By focusing on the whole family rather than on the individual heads of households, the model is expected to produce long-term lasting benefits for the entire household, creating fortified safety net in the event of unfortunate setbacks that may affect a single member of the household such as accident or illness, or loss of gainful employment.



