

**Alert note**

*Forced Displacement due to Armed Conflict, Colombia – Catatumbo Region  
22 June 2026*

**Completed by:** Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de Colombia (IELCO) y Federación Luterana Mundial (LWF)

**Date completed:** June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026

**Forum:** Colombia

**Type of emergency:** Forced Displacement due to Armed Conflict

**Funding Survey**

If the forum indicates a plan to launch an appeal, we request funding members to please fill out this [survey form](#) which will help the **Emergency Steering Committee** assess the funding environment for this response. Please respond to this survey *within 24 hours of Alert publication*.

**1. The nature of the emergency**

The Catatumbo Region, in the department of Norte de Santander, Colombia, is facing a complex, large-scale emergency combining internal conflict, mass displacement, confinement, mobility restrictions, cumulative deterioration of the protection environment, food shortages, and institutional fragility.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), on 13 April 2026, the mass displacement of at least 170 families, corresponding to 510 people, was [reported](#) from the villages of Cerro Madera and La Selva, in the Campo Dos district. Likewise, 65 families, corresponding to 180 people, were displaced from the Pacelli district, specifically from the villages of Buenos Aires, San Martín, and San Luis. Between March and April, the [OCHA report](#) indicates that at least 359 families were displaced. Among the affected people, 435 are refugees and migrants who, due to their migratory status, face barriers in accessing essential services such as healthcare. Similarly, around 430 displaced people are children and adolescents, representing 42% of the total affected population.

According to the [Ombudsman’s Office](#), on 2 June 2026, the forced displacement of 293 families, corresponding to 784 people, was recorded. They came from the villages of El Mirador, Cañahuate, La Torcoroma, El Salado, Llano Alto, and Brisas del Catatumbo, in the municipality of El Tarra, Norte de Santander.

According to the latest report from [OCHA’s Local Coordination Team](#), as of 12 June 2026, in the municipality of Sardinata and its surrounding villages in Catatumbo, local authorities reported 576 displaced people, corresponding to 213 families. Among the affected population, there are at least 146 children and adolescents, and at least 57 refugees and migrants of Venezuelan nationality.

Based on the above figures, it is confirmed that the Catatumbo Region is in a phase of prolonged crisis due to violence caused by armed conflict. This crisis is characterized by a sustained increase in displacement, the re-emergence of confinement, constant pressure on peace agreement signatories and social leaders, the cumulative deterioration of the protection environment, and an institutional response with operational limitations in terms of coverage and timeliness. To date, June 2026, there are no guarantees for the safe return of the population to their territories.

**2. The impact and scale of the emergency (please include your source of information with links if possible)**

According to the initial assessment of the Colombia Forum, this is a complex, large-scale, slow-onset emergency combining internal armed conflict, mass displacement, confinement, difficulty accessing basic services, food shortages, and fragile institutions.

- According to [OCHA](#), nearly 100,000 people have been displaced.
- According to [UNICEF](#), at least 84,165 people, including 70,000 children and adolescents, have been severely affected.

- According to figures provided by official sources and [analysed by UNICEF](#), 52,807 people have been victims of forced displacement, 18,000 of whom are children and adolescents, while another 31,355 people are facing mobility restrictions and confinement.
- According to the regional and national team of the [Colombian Family Welfare Institute \(ICBF\)](#), since the beginning of the crisis, assistance has been provided to 2,050 families, 88 pregnant women, and 189 breastfeeding women affected by the emergency in Catatumbo.
- According to [UNHCR](#), at least 4,600 people displaced by the crisis in Catatumbo are Venezuelan refugees and migrants.
- According to the Office of the Inspector General, as of May 2026, Catatumbo had the highest number of victims of anti-personnel mines and improvised explosive devices at the national level during the first quarter of 2026.

Affected people are exposed to multiple risks, including extreme poverty, the possibility of homelessness, unmet basic needs, and recruitment by criminal structures in host cities, among others.

**3. Local and national capacity**

The local and national response to date has included the following: The **Governor’s Office**: 352.5 tonnes of food, including 226.9 tonnes of food through co-responsibility arrangements and 125.6 tonnes of food through donations. **ICBF**: Assistance to 12,965 children and adolescents; 328,145 units of liquid Bienestarina ((nutritional food supplement) and 26,402 units of powdered Bienestarina were delivered. **Colombian Red Cross**: 17,339 health consultations provided; 22,178 food and non-food emergency humanitarian assistance kits delivered; 2,477 people reached through water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) actions; and 1,954 participants reached through protection activities. **Victims’ Unit — UARIV**: Immediate in-kind humanitarian assistance amounting to COP 40,241,114,103, and cash humanitarian assistance amounting to COP 1,552,361,400. **Colombian Civil Defense** actions: 987 pre-hospital care services provided, consolidated figure; 1,200 people benefiting from food assistance in Cúcuta and Ocaña, including breakfast, lunch and dinner, daily figure; and 173 tonnes of humanitarian aid transported.(Source: Governor’s Office of Norte de Santander, 2026).

**4. Key needs and gaps**

The initial assessment of the Colombia Forum indicates that the main gaps in the response are in the following areas:

- Psychosocial and mental health support.
- Prevention of risks associated with gender-based violence.
- Child protection and peacebuilding.
- Support for livelihoods recovery.
- Case management and legal assistance, among others.
- Explosive Ordnance Risk Education

Gaps:

- Limited state capacity to respond to emerging needs in all affected municipalities, especially in rural areas.
- Difficulties in ensuring safe humanitarian access due to the increasing intensity of the armed conflict.
- Lack of shelters following their closure during the first months of the emergency and the exhaustion of resources from the presidential emergency decrees.

Please indicate whether you are considering:

	Indicate your intention with an X below
Rapid Response Fund ( <i>intended for small and medium scale emergencies</i> )	
Appeal ( <i>intended for large scale emergencies</i> )	<b>X</b>

**5. Forum Capacity and members intention to respond**

ACT Member	Geographical focus	Sectors of expertise and experience
Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de Colombia (IELCO)	<b>Departament:</b> North Santander. <b>Cities:</b> Cúcuta and Ocaña. <b>Villages:</b> La Ermita, Camilo Daza, José Bernal, Nuevo Horizonte, Valles del rodeo, La Torcoroma, Villa del Rosario, Centro histórico, Altos del Norte, La Perla, Villa Paraíso, Aguas Claras, Otaré, Galán.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cash assistance</li> <li>- Psychosocial support</li> <li>- Livelihoods</li> <li>- Prevention of gender-based violence</li> <li>- Child protection</li> <li>- Peacebuilding</li> </ul>
Lutheran World Federation (LWF)	<b>Departament:</b> North Santander. <b>Cities:</b> Cúcuta and Ocaña. <b>Villages:</b> La Ermita, Camilo Daza, José Bernal, Nuevo Horizonte, Valles del rodeo, La Torcoroma, Villa del Rosario, Centro histórico, Altos del Norte, La Perla, Villa Paraíso, Aguas Claras, Otaré, Galán.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WASH</li> <li>- Food security</li> <li>- Cash assistance</li> <li>- Explosive Ordnance Risk Education</li> <li>- Protection</li> </ul>

## 6. Potential responses

The response planned by the Colombia Forum will last 12 months and includes immediate assistance, accompanied by sustainability components — protection, early recovery, and resilience — which are essential to ensure that the actions implemented continue beyond the end of the response. The sectors of intervention that respond to the identified gaps are:

- **Psychosocial support:** individual and collective psychosocial accompaniment through psychological first aid, follow-up, and referrals to specialized institutions.
- **Prevention:** prevention of GBV, child protection, and peacebuilding.
- **Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE):** The use of anti-personnel mines (APM), unexploded ordnance (UXO), and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by non-state armed groups has turned rural areas of Catatumbo into mined areas. This training is essential for displaced people who decide to return to their territories, even though there are no security guarantees for doing so.
- **Livelihoods:** It is essential to provide monetary resources to displaced people who intend to remain in their current locations in order to support the generation of livelihoods. For displaced people, the forced abandonment of their land implies the total loss of their productive assets. According to [OCHA \(2025\)](#), more than 30% of Catatumbo’s population, approximately 113,000 people, are in need.
- **Legal assistance:** Coordination with legal clinics and the referral of affected people to specialized institutions providing legal assistance constitute one of the intervention pillars that will be implemented to guarantee displaced people’s access to justice. Survivors of explosive ordnance require specific guidance to access the AICMA pathway, including disability assessment boards, physical and psychological rehabilitation, and socioeconomic inclusion.