

# Legal Protection in Emergencies

May 2024



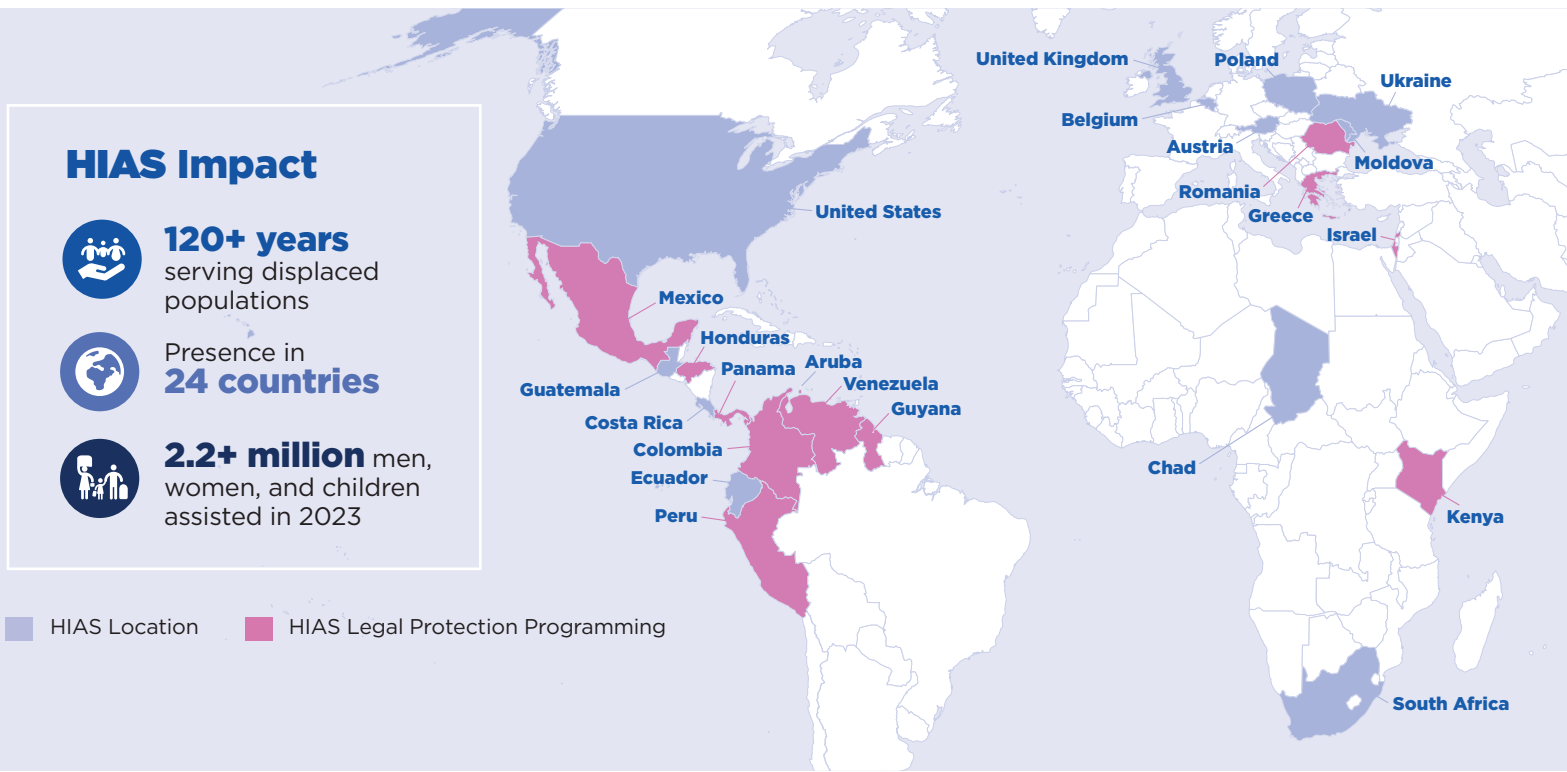
Welcome the stranger.  
Protect the refugee.

## Our Organization

For over 120 years, HIAS has provided lifesaving assistance and protection services during crises. HIAS responds to emergencies with critical assistance in several key areas: Prevention, Mitigation, and Response to Gender-Based Violence (GBV); Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS); Economic Inclusion (including cash assistance); and Legal Protection and Resettlement

## Emergency Legal Protection

The form that Legal Protection interventions take in emergency settings is highly dependent on the ability and willingness of host state institutions to process the legal claims of people affected by displacement. HIAS's Legal Protection programming in past emergency settings has included information sessions to reach populations on the move in a context where state institutions were not functional, and in other settings where traditional legal services expanded to respond to increased demand.



## Our Legal Protection Team

HIAS' Legal Protection Team is comprised of technical legal experts with broad global and country-specific experience. The Technical Team guides HIAS's Legal Protection strategy, ensuring it is aligned with international standards. HIAS has an emergency deployment roster composed of over 30 legal professionals able to provide surge support in an emergency.



Lawyer Jesús Abarca, Protection Assistant for HIAS Costa Rica, talks with a Nicaraguan refugee who is receiving legal support from HIAS in Ciudad Quesada, San Carlos, Costa Rica, February 27, 2024. (Mayela López for HIAS)

# Legal Protection Achievements



## Darién Gap

HIAS' cross-border regional protection project covers the Colombia-Panama-Costa Rica corridor, with recent extensions into Honduras. Legal Protection work plays a pivotal role by providing migrants and refugees with information about rights and services, and facilitating safe and informed decision-making. HIAS offers personalized legal support including international protection, legal stay/migratory regularization, and protection against exploitation.



## Israel

HIAS provides free legal assistance to asylum seekers who are LGBTQ+ individuals, survivors of torture and trafficking, elderly refugees, or from other marginalized communities. In January 2024, following HIAS Israel's petition, a court ruled certain Sudanese asylum seekers from Darfur, Nuba, and Blue Nile be granted resident status and a reasonable assessment time for asylum claims is only up to 12 months. This landmark decision affects over 1,000 asylum seekers.

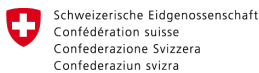
## Legal Protection Approach

HIAS' legal protection work aims to safeguard the rights and well-being of individuals affected by crises. These approaches often involve public information sessions designed to improve awareness of essential rights and help people make safe decisions; legal advice; and court representation, including strategic litigation. HIAS' legal protection programming is founded in international humanitarian law, the framework for ensuring the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, regardless of the crises.

## Coordination

HIAS holds its responsibility to coordinate assistance in emergencies as critical. HIAS engages with communities and civil, national, and global stakeholders to ensure an effective response. HIAS takes an active role in protection clusters, including at the regional level.

## Donors and Partners



## Contact

For more information, please contact:

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## Why HIAS?

**Long-Standing Experience:** HIAS was founded over 120 years ago to support Jews fleeing persecution and poverty in Eastern Europe. Today, HIAS is a global organization which serves refugees, asylum seekers, and other forcibly displaced and stateless persons around the world, and advocates for their fundamental rights so they can rebuild their lives.

**Balanced Localization:** HIAS partners with key local institutions, civil society organizations and leaders in disaster planning, budgeting, training, and risk sharing.

**Technical Leadership:** HIAS' Legal Protection programming offers affected communities highly effective legal services, from updated, timely information to support in complex court proceedings and strategic litigation on behalf of refugee and asylee populations.

**Sector Integration:** HIAS integrated programming models ensure that participants are served in a dignified, comprehensive way. Building upon a protection continuum, activities are embedded within HIAS' individual case management system, including child protection, GBV response and prevention, food security and nutrition, legal assistance and livelihoods.

**Trusted Partnerships:** HIAS works with a variety of public, private and individual donors including the US Government (PRM and BHA), UN agencies (UNHCR, WFP), local NGOs, corporations, private foundations, and Jewish communities around the globe.

**Committed Across the Displacement:** HIAS programs often begin during an acute emergency but continue serving individuals throughout their long journey of displacement. HIAS' geographic presence and range of programs allows for life-saving assistance, the rebuilding of families and communities, and the promotion of sustainable social and economic empowerment.