




Belize

May - June 2023

Key Figures

 **4,130**
Refugees and asylum-seekers in Belize are mainly from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.

 **157**
Asylum-seekers received humanitarian assistance to enhance access to food, shelter, health, and other basic needs.

 **65**
Refugees and asylum-seekers received livelihood training and support to enhance local integration and self-reliance.

Context

Belize participated in a Regional Forum organized by the Regional Integrated Framework for Protection and Solutions (MIRPS)' Pro-tempore Presidency. During the event, Belize's representative, the CEO of Immigration, presented the country's achievements on local integration, highlighting the importance of the Amnesty programme on the inclusion of asylum-seekers. Over 12,760 people have applied for permanent residency.

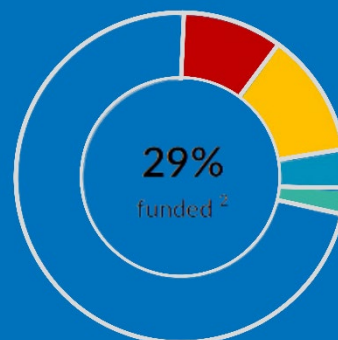
Recently, the Senate approved BZ\$69 million (over US\$34 million) for a supplementary budget, including BZ\$500,000 (nearly US\$250,000) for the Amnesty' verification phase.

Police officials are conducting in-person verifications, enabling applicants to obtain electronic receipts of their claims with a code for tracking their progress.

At a press conference in commemoration of the World Refugee Day (WRD), authorities stated that Belize has 220 recognized refugees, and most of the asylum-seekers in the country applied for the Amnesty Programme.

UNHCR led an information session for 105 La Inmaculada primary school students in Orange Walk, Northern Belize, focusing on the Agency's mandate and activities. UNHCR explained the difference between a refugee and a migrant and met with one of the teachers, a refugee from El Salvador who fled his country when he was 11 years old.

Regional funding Overview as of 27 April, 2023



- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

\$55.4 million
UNHCR's financial requirements 2023

¹ Financial requirement for the Panama MCO in 2023 including requirements for the operations and activities in Aruba, Belize, Cuba, Curaçao, Guyana, Nicaragua, Panama, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

² The percentage funded is indicative.

UNHCR RESPONSE

UNHCR collaborates closely with the Government, civil society, UN agencies, refugees, and asylum-seekers in Belize. A partnership with the Refugees Department helps channel support and continues strengthening the asylum system in the country. Additionally, UNHCR works in partnership with Help for Progress (HfP), HUMANA People to People Belize (HUMANA), and the Human Rights Commission of Belize (HRCB).



Protection | UNHCR and OHCHR trained 15 officials of the Belize Police Department on refugee law and human rights-based approaches in law enforcement. UNHCR and HRCB assisted 26 asylum-seekers with legal aid and representation, including enhancing access to birth registration.



Humanitarian Assistance | UNHCR with HfP provided humanitarian assistance to 157 refugees and asylum-seekers. Seventy-three asylum-seekers received vouchers to enhance access to food; 33 were supported with temporary shelter, and 17 with in-kind assistance to cover their basic needs. Additionally, UNHCR provided mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to 32 asylum-seekers and provided primary healthcare for two individuals with protection needs.



Livelihoods | UNHCR, HUMANA and HfP delivered livelihood and skills training courses to 65 refugees and asylum-seekers to enhance local integration. Training included English classes, jewellery making and sewing courses. UNHCR provided six asylum-seekers with tools and materials to support the start-up of their small businesses and helped 18 asylum-seekers get their food handlers licenses, allowing them to work independently or find jobs.



Information and support | UNHCR's partners, HRCB and HfP, provided information on access to basic rights and asylum in Belize to 86 people, and HUMANA, informed over 60 on the Amnesty exercise. Humana also supported the Government's Amnesty Unit issuing electronic receipts for amnesty applicants, including 38 asylum-seekers. The electronic receipt will allow individuals who applied for the amnesty exercise to track the progress of their applications through a barcode.



MARKET DAY COMMEMORATING THE WORLD REFUGEE DAY (WRD)

Twenty-two refugees and asylum-seekers, part of UNHCR's livelihoods programme, participated in a Market Day organized by UNHCR and the Bella Vista Municipality to celebrate WRD, with their handcrafted products and food items. Approximately 400 people visited UNHCR's booth for information on international protection.

UNHCR Panama MCO wishes to convey a special thank you to its donors: the United States of America, the European Union, Guyana, and the UN Programme on HIV/AIDS. We also thank the fundamental support provided by donors who have contributed to UNHCR with unearmarked and softly earmarked funds: Belgium | Canada | Denmark | France | Germany | Ireland | Japan | Netherlands | Norway | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | private donors in Australia, Japan the Republic of Korea, and Spain.

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UNHCR's presence in Belize

