

January - March 2024

Key Figures

**172**

refugees and asylum-seekers from **20 countries** are under UNHCR's mandate.

**50 per cent**

lack legal status in the country, and **35 per cent** are women and children.

**70**

people need resettlement. Most are from Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, Sudan, and Haiti.

Context

Cuba is not a state party to international refugee instruments. UNHCR ensures refugees are protected against refoulement and granted access to essential services.

In January, the Government announced **price increases** for electricity services, fuels, and liquefied gas. Although the measure was initially planned to enter into force on 1 February, it was **postponed** until **1 March** due to an alleged cybersecurity attack on the state-owned corporation CIMEX. New gasoline and diesel **prices** range from CUB 114 (USD 0.95) to CUP 198 (USD 1.65) per litre.

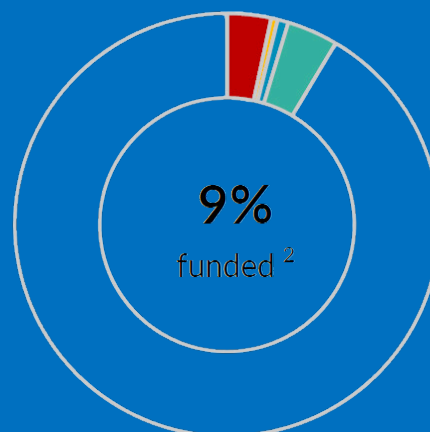
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that the Special Rapporteurs of the **UN Human Rights Council** wrote to the US government regarding the country's restrictive measures towards Cuba. The note highlighted that the economic blockade and Cuba's inclusion on the list of countries sponsoring terrorism are severe violations of International Law.

Protests occurred in Santiago de Cuba, Bayamo and other areas due to long-lasting blackouts and food shortages.

From January to March, UNHCR counselled 20 people on refugee status determination (RSD), resettlement (RST), access to documentation and health services.

Regional funding Overview

as of 31 March 2024



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

\$56.1 million

UNHCR's financial requirements 2024

¹ Financial requirement for the Panama MCO in 2024 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

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the official counterpart of UNHCR in Cuba. UNHCR collaborates with the Ministry of Education, Public Health, Foreign Trade and International Collaboration, and the Cuban Red Cross. Several academic institutions, such as the University of Havana and the Group of International Humanitarian Law Studies disseminate information related to International Refugee Law.



Advocacy | UNHCR promotes Cuba's accession to international refugee protection and statelessness instruments and the adoption of measures to improve access to rights and services. UNHCR raises awareness of refugee issues by disseminating International Refugee Law and its principles among government institutions, NGOs, and academia, seeking to promote a refugee-sensitive culture.



Protection | UNHCR provides international protection to persons in need, including refugee status determination (RSD) under UNHCR mandate and the search for durable solutions. UNHCR has assisted 20 refugees and asylum-seekers with counselling sessions on RSD procedures, national regulations pertinent to their status and protection, and durable solutions assessments and procedures, including resettlement.



Cash-based Interventions and Assistance | Due to a lack of defined status, many refugees and asylum-seekers cannot access employment and secure livelihoods and have limited income-generating alternatives. Thus, UNHCR conducts activities to ensure their safety and access to basic needs. From January to March, UNHCR supported 275 people with cash-based interventions to cover basic needs and shelter. Of these, 94 were new beneficiaries.



Education and Training Opportunities | Thanks to verbal agreements with the Cuban government, refugees and asylum-seekers have access to free primary and secondary education. Sixty-seven young refugees, most from Western Sahara, have access to different study levels, including university. UNHCR provides small complementary assistance to the government scholarships for Sahrawi refugee students to cover their basic needs.



INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES FOR REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN CUBA

Social inclusion allows refugees and asylum-seekers to participate in their community fully and fosters peaceful societies. UNHCR liaised with the Cuban Red Cross to integrate forcibly displaced groups in a community outreach, benefiting 500 people residing in nursing homes.

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UNHCR's presence in Cuba

