

Cuba

April - June 2024

Key Figures



180

refugees and asylum-seekers from **19 countries** are under UNHCR's mandate.



49 per cent

lack legal status in the country, and **34 per cent** are women and children.



79

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

Context

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

Since March, the President has hosted the podcast "*Desde la Presidencia*" (From the Presidency) with representatives from key sectors. The show addresses issues, such as energy, transportation, economy, and food.

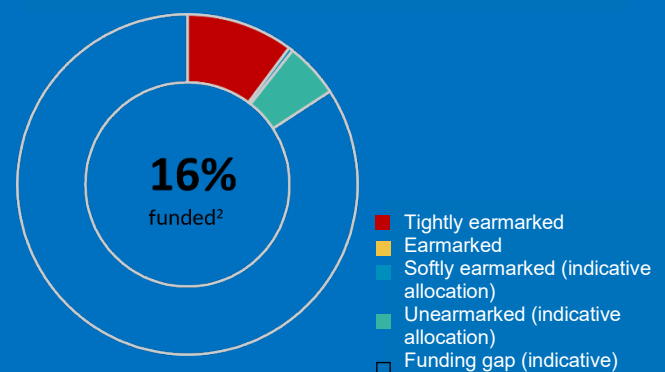
Cuba and the United States held bilateral talks in Washington DC, to discuss displacement and migration. Participants reviewed the implementation of the countries' bilateral agreements, intended to guarantee regular, safe, and orderly migration.

In June 2024, the **National Assembly** published two legislative projects on **immigration** and **citizenship**. One of the projects introduced the category of humanitarian residents, which would directly impact refugees' and asylum-seekers' access to fundamental rights. The other proposed bill acknowledged non-nationals who cannot prove their link to another country, proposing identification measures for these individuals.

UNHCR and other United Nations agencies met with Dennis Francis, President of the seventy-eighth session of the UN General Assembly. Participants discussed key achievements, challenges faced, and emerging opportunities to strengthen the response to vulnerable groups, including refugees and asylum-seekers.

Regional funding Overview

as of 30 June 2024



\$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 UNHCR's official counterpart 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 over 200 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, health services, education and cash-based assistance (CBI).



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. UNHCR conducts activities to ensure their safety and access to basic needs. From April to June, UNHCR provided cash-based assistance to 92 people (274 disbursements) to cover basic needs and shelter. Of these, two were new beneficiaries.



Education and Training Opportunities | Thanks to verbal agreements with the 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.



Dennis Francis visits the University of Havana

The President of the seventy-eighth session of the UN General Assembly visited the [University of Havana](#) and delivered the keynote lecture 'Cuba and Multilateralism: Opportunities and Challenges.' In recognition of his extensive service in strengthening peace, he was honored with the University's 295th Anniversary Plaque. Francis's visit aimed to review the country's progress and contribution to multilateralism, cooperation, and regional challenges faced.

UNHCR Panama MCO wishes to convey a special thank you to its donors: Australia | Belgium | Denmark | European Union | France | Ireland | Republic of Korea | The Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | United States of America | Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS | Private donors from the Republic of Korea, Australia for UNHCR, España con ACNUR, and the Dutch Postcode Lottery.

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UNHCR's presence in Cuba

