

Aruba & Curaçao

January-February 2023

Key Figures



Approximately

32,000

Venezuelan refugees and migrants are living in Aruba and Curacao.



1 in 6

Displaced people in Aruba need international protection.



1 in 11

Displaced people in Curacao need international protection.

Aruba and Curaçao are the first and third countries in the world with the largest number of refugees and migrants compared to their local population.

Context

The 1967 Protocol and the 1951 Refugee Convention apply to Aruba. However, Curaçao does not consider itself bound by this instrument, which often exposes refugees and asylum-seekers to abuse, exploitation, and detention.

In January, the Netherlands announced additional funds for Curaçao to improve the Detention Centre for Non-Nationals (VODC) reception conditions. Curacao plans to hire and train additional staff to establish a medical room within the VODC to comply with international standards.

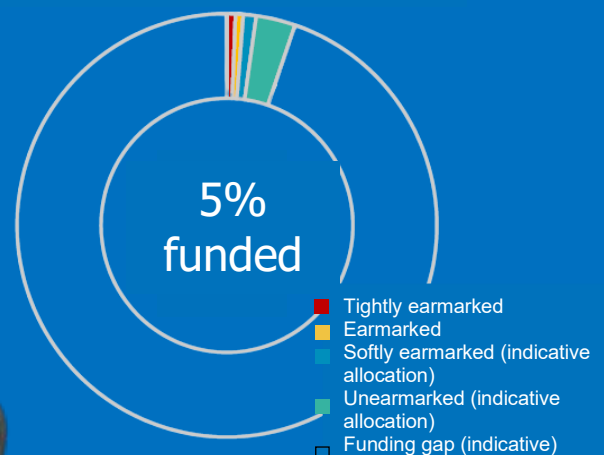
In February, authorities in Aruba and Curaçao announced the reopening of sea borders with Venezuela, ending a four-year border closure between the countries.

Considering both islands' small size and limited absorption capacity, UNHCR continues to engage with partners in both countries to facilitate access to legal counselling, primary healthcare, and assistance for refugees and asylum-seekers, including the promotion of integration, peaceful co-existence, and self-reliance.

In Curaçao, UNHCR supports the local community-based organization *Bos di Hubentut Foundation* with sexual education materials for children.

Regional funding Overview

as of February 28th, 2023



\$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 works with one partner in Aruba and two in Curaçao and supports both States in delivering assistance and protection to refugees and asylum seekers. In the framework of the Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants (R4V), UNHCR works in coordination with partners to respond to education needs, food security, health, integration, protection, shelter, WASH, and Gender-Based Violence (GBV).



Protection | UNHCR identified and pre-screened 89 individuals for resettlement and interviewed 51 others. UNHCR, through partner HIAS, conducted a protection screening for 55 individuals and referred five for assistance. UNHCR provided counseling and legal assistance to 10 individuals in Aruba, and together with partner Human Rights Defense Curacao (HRDC), made 111 calls to the immigration detention facility, interviewing 84 people. Furthermore, UNHCR conducted six sessions with lawyers to discuss strategic litigation.



Health | UNHCR through *Salù pa Tur* (SPT) assisted 1,021 people in Curaçao with 2,058 primary health consultations. The Agency also provided 18 individuals with psychological assistance and treated 133 people for diabetes and hypertension. UNHCR with SPT facilitated an outreach event in a host community in Curaçao, handed out hygiene pads, condoms, and clothing, and checked the participants' glucose levels and blood pressure.



Local Integration | In January, UNHCR, through HIAS, organized an activity called "*Manualidades y Costura*" to promote social cohesion among refugees, asylum-seekers, and host community members in Aruba. In February, HIAS organized an integration activity for teenagers called "*Yo apoyo a mis amigos*", and a cultural event arranged with the help of community mobilizers called "*Amor i Amistad*". A total of 80 people participated in both events.



Cash-based Assistance | In Aruba, UNHCR, through HIAS, provided 34 individuals with medical cash-based interventions to enhance their access to healthcare.



UNHCR INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES

Throughout January and February, UNHCR and HIAS organized soft skills training, language courses, and recreational activities benefiting 80 refugees and asylum-seekers in Aruba.

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

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UNHCR's presence in Aruba & Curaçao

