FACT SHEET

Aruba & Curaçao

UNHCR ACNUR
La Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados

May - June 2023

Key Figures

Approximately

31,000
Venezuelan refugees and migrants live 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 populations.

Context

The 1967 Protocol and the 1951 Refugee Convention apply to Aruba. Curaçao does not consider itself bound by these instruments, often exposing refugees and asylum-seekers to abuse, exploitation, and detention.

The Council of Europe's anti-torture Committee (CPT) published a report on its visit to Aruba and Curaçao conducted in 2022, indicating that conditions in the police and immigration detention facilities were poor and lacked adequate sanitary measures. The CPT formulated a series of recommendations, as detainees were held under these circumstances for up to 10 days or longer.

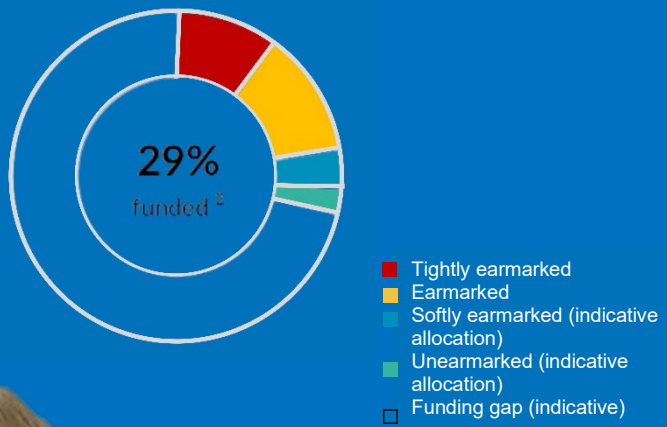
In Curaçao, a political party proposed an amendment to the Constitution prohibiting same-sex couples from marrying, raising concerns of several LGBTQI+ organizations. Last December, a court ruled that dispositions excluding same-sex marriages are unconstitutional and not applicable. The Government lodged appeal actions and the Cabinet reaffirmed that there is no legal obligation to allow same-sex marriages.

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 promoting integration, peaceful co-existence, and self-reliance.

In Aruba, UNHCR is collecting data to assess the needs of refugees, asylum-seekers, and others in need of international protection. As of 30 June, the Agency has assessed the needs of over 1,320 people to improve the provision of humanitarian services.

Regional funding Overview

as of 27 April 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 173 individuals for resettlement and interviewed 131 others. UNHCR, through HIAS, screened 74 individuals and referred 30 for assistance. The Agency provided counselling and legal assistance to two individuals in Aruba, and, with partner Human Rights Defense Curacao (HRDC), made 45 calls to the immigration detention facility. UNHCR organized a two-day Refugee Status Determination (RSD) training for the Objection Advisory Committee members of the National Ordinance on Administrative Justice (LAR). The LAR committee oversees objections submitted against a negative asylum decision and advises the immigration authority on asylum cases.

Health | UNHCR through *Salù pa Tur* (SPT) assisted 585 people in Curaçao with 2,326 primary health consultations. The Agency provided 11 individuals with psychological care and treated 104 people for diabetes and hypertension. SPT covered the specialized HIV treatment of six refugees and asylum-seekers.

Cash-based Assistance | In Aruba, UNHCR, through HIAS, provided 77 individuals with medical cash-based interventions to enhance access to healthcare.

Gender-based Violence (GBV) prevention | UNHCR and HIAS conducted a two-day GBV case management training in Aruba for the Department of Social Affairs (DAS). Nineteen officials participated in the workshop, which focused on applying a survivor-centered approach and specialized treatment for the attention of vulnerable groups.

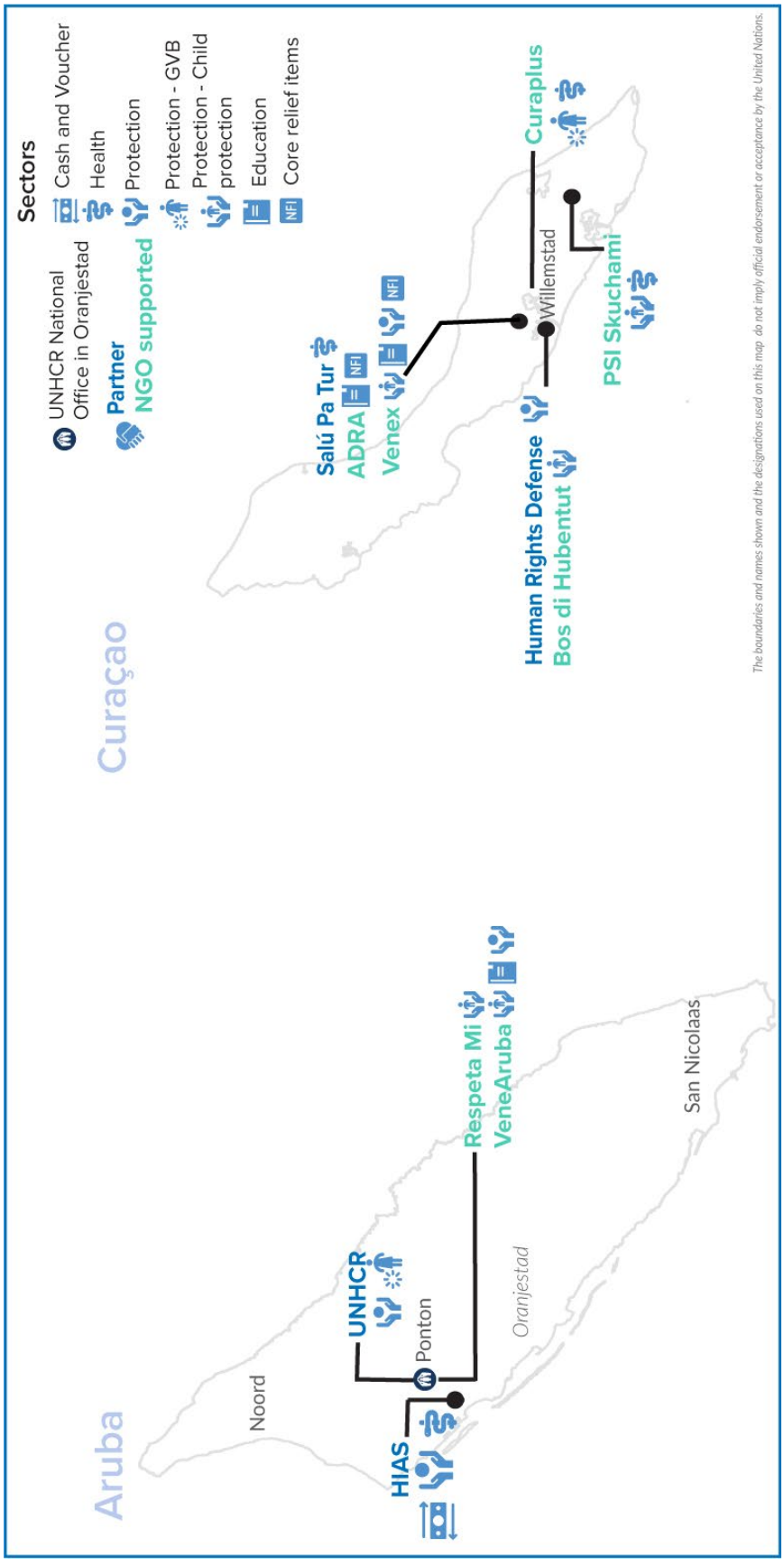
World Refugee Day in Aruba and Curaçao

In **Aruba**, UNHCR, IOM, HIAS, PADF, VeneAruba Solidaria, Centro Famia Piedra Plat, and Xavier University, organized a health fair with over 200 people. Attendees had access to medical checks, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) lectures, and cultural activities.

In **Curacao**, UNHCR, with PADF, IOM, Venex, Caritas, Skuchami, HRDC, Sociedad Bolivariana, and Salu pa Tur hosted a family fair for approximately 300 people and provided blood sugar checks, mental health, and sports activities, face painting and live music.

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.

For more information:

Philippa Candler, Representative, candler@unhcr.org
Viola Eleonora Bruttomesso, Associate Communications Officer, bruttome@unhcr.org
Links: Twitter | Facebook

UNHCR's presence in Aruba & Curaçao