

Aruba & Curaçao

September - October 2023

Context

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.

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.

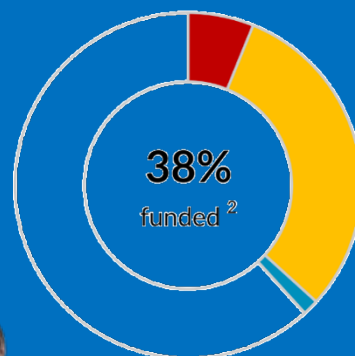
In Curacao, the Public Prosecutor's Office warned of an increase in the trafficking of children aged four to fifteen between Venezuela and this island. The Office highlighted that these children are often transported in small vessels carrying drugs and firearms, increasing their protection risks.

Moreover, the Court of First Instance ruled that the Minister of Justice's (MoJ) immigration detention procedure was unlawful, as it did not meet international standards. The Court criticized the MoJ's lack of proportionality assessments and emphasized that it must conduct a hearing with foreign nationals to assess their needs and justify the grounds for their detention.

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.

Regional funding Overview

as of 31 October 2023



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

UNHCR and HIAS held a Kickingball Tournament for Venezuelan refugees, migrants and host community members. The initiative seeks to foster local integration and enhance participants' well-being through sports.



\$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 38 individuals for resettlement and interviewed 238 others. UNHCR, through HIAS, screened 148 individuals and referred 42 for assistance. The Agency provided counselling and legal assistance to three individuals in Aruba, and, with partner Human Rights Defense Curacao (HRDC), made 19 calls to the immigration detention facility. UNHCR conducted two trainings on child protection and best-interest procedures for 55 government officials and NGOs staff Aruba and Curacao.



Health | UNHCR through *Salù pa Tur* (SPT) assisted 1,081 people in Curaçao with 2,231 primary health consultations. The Agency provided 63 individuals with psychological care and treated 89 people for diabetes and hypertension. SPT also provided sexual and reproductive health services for 27 refugees and asylum-seekers.



Cash-based Assistance | In Aruba, UNHCR, through HIAS, provided 14 individuals with medical cash-based interventions to enhance access to healthcare.



Local integration | UNHCR, through HIAS, organized the event “*Me encanta verte sonreir*” (I love to see you smile) for boys and girls aged two to twelve. The event brought together 32 children from different nationalities, allowing them to interact in an inclusive and fun environment.



PSEA Training in Aruba

As part of the yearly Community-Based Protection (CBP) strategy, UNHCR held a training on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). This training was provided to community mobilizers, and a total of 15 individuals participated.

UNHCR Panama MCO wishes to convey a special thank you to its donors: the United States of America, the European Union, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), Guyana, Spain 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 | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | private donors in Australia, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

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UNHCR's presence in Aruba & Curaçao

