

Aruba & Curaçao

November – December 2023

Key Figures



Approximately

31,000

Venezuelan refugees and migrants live in Aruba and Curacao.



6,710

Asylum-seekers and other forcibly displaced people in Curacao received primary health care services in 2023.



Aruba and Curaçao are the **first** and **third** countries in the world with the **largest number of refugees** and other forcibly displaced people compared to their local populations.

Context

Aruba and Curacao are two **self-governing constituent countries** of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. They are autonomous but are not part of the European Union. Neither Dutch asylum law nor European law and directives apply to these two countries. The **1967 Protocol** and the **1951 Refugee Convention** apply to Aruba. Curaçao does not consider itself bound by these instruments.

In Curacao, the Minister of Justice announced **translating migration forms** from Dutch into Spanish to facilitate the process for applicants and combat those who charge excessive fees for the procedures. Human rights defenders applauded the initiative and highlighted the need for an effective migration policy.

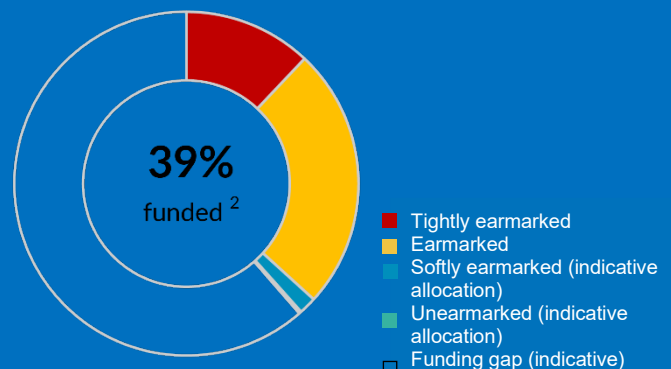
On 10 December, three boats tried to enter Aruba's territorial waters. One of them capsized, leading to the **deaths of four people**. During the same period, another boat carrying nine passengers also attempted to enter Aruba from Venezuela, but it was later discovered by Colombian officials with **no survivors**.

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

UNHCR's protection monitoring exercise assessed the needs of refugees, asylum-seekers, and others needing international protection. The Agency completed 413 interviews, reaching 888 people.

Regional funding Overview

as of 15 December 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 countries 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 30 individuals for resettlement and interviewed 82 others. UNHCR, through HIAS, registered 45 individuals and referred 12 for assistance. The Agency provided counselling and legal assistance to four individuals in Aruba. UNHCR hired a consultant to work on the Quality Assurance Initiative (QAI), a joint project with the Government of Aruba, aiming to improve the efficiency and sustainability of the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) system by development of policies and strategies. The QAI evaluates the existing procedures and provides a comprehensive report with recommendations.



Health | UNHCR through *Salù pa Tur* (SPT) assisted 989 people in Curaçao with 1,801 primary health consultations. The Agency provided 24 individuals with psychological care and treated 82 people for diabetes and hypertension. SPT also provided sexual and reproductive health services for 19 refugees and asylum-seekers.



Cash-based Assistance and Medical Vouchers | In Aruba, UNHCR, through HIAS, provided 48 individuals with medical vouchers to access healthcare and assisted 21 people with cash-based assistance to cover basic needs.



Interagency | UNHCR and IOM conducted a participatory assessment in Curaçao to understand the situation of the displaced community. The Agencies held nine focus group discussions, averaging 10 individuals each, including asylum-seekers and others in need of international protection. Moreover, UNHCR hosted a certificate renewal exercise, providing 54 people with new certificates.



COMMEMORATING THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

In **Aruba**, UNHCR and partners hosted an "Orange the World" parade, under the GBV prevention campaign "Paving the Pathway to Gender Equality". In **Curacao**, UNHCR co-organized two screenings of the movie "In the Time of the Butterflies," narrating the story of the Mirabal sisters during the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. UNHCR supported Venex Curacao in organizing two multimedia workshops related to the movie screening.

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: Australia for UNHCR | Belgium | Canada | Denmark | España con ACNUR | France | Germany | Ireland | Japan | Japan for UNHCR | Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Sweden for UNHCR | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United Kingdom for UNHCR | UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe | USA for UNHCR | Private donors in China, Italy, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

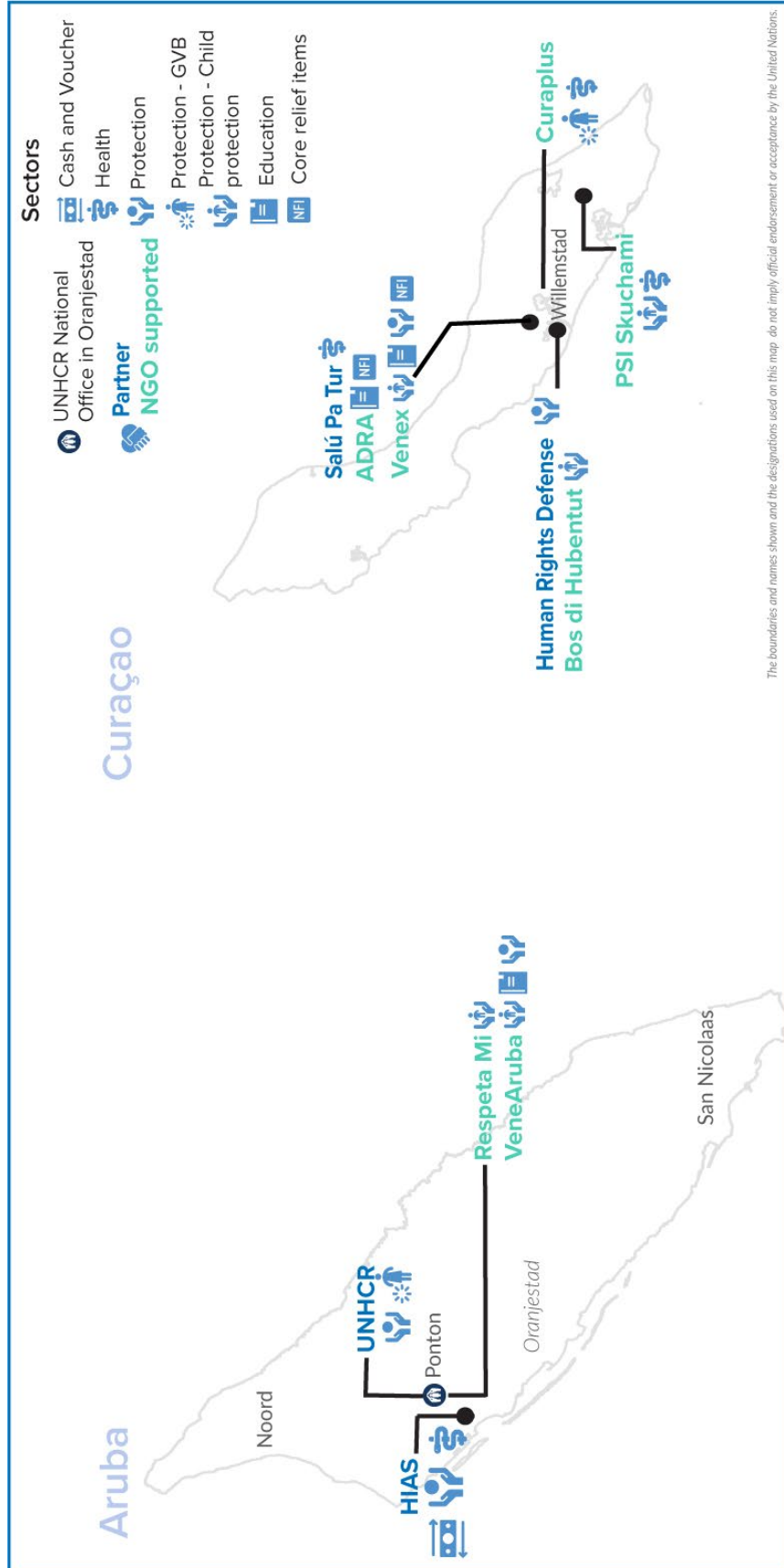
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UNHCR's presence in Aruba & Curaçao



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