

Belize



April - June 2025

Key Figures



2,300

Refugees and asylum-seekers live in Belize, mainly from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.



74

Refugees and asylum-seekers received legal assistance and counselling through UNHCR and its partners.



45

Asylum-seekers received direct assistance from UNHCR to access documentation.

Context

Belize has a history of protecting refugees, particularly those fleeing violence in neighboring countries. The country is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and has established a national framework under the 1991 Refugees Act. UNHCR supports the Government in strengthening the asylum system, establishing protection policies, and facilitating durable solutions to assist forcibly displaced people.

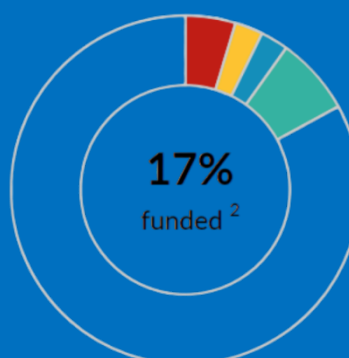
In May, Belize's Cabinet approved an extension of the eligibility criteria for the [Amnesty Programme](#), enabling individuals with documentary proof of residence in Belize up to December 2019 to apply for regularization. Previously, this requirement was limited to [2016](#), but now it allows long-term residents who were previously ineligible to access permanent residency.

Launched in mid-2022, the [Amnesty Programme](#) has served as a complementary protection pathway for individuals in need of international protection. Over 12,000 undocumented people, including more than 700 asylum-seekers applied. As of 2024, Belize had granted amnesty to 492 asylum-seekers, and UNHCR assisted over 170 with the costs of their permanent residency IDs.

In June, UNHCR, Bella Vista High School, and HUMANA People to People organized a football tournament to honor World Refugee Day. Students from the school, including refugees and asylum-seekers, formed mixed teams and played side by side throughout the event, showcasing unity and teamwork.



Regional funding Overview as of 30 June 2025



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

\$53.4 million¹

UNHCR's financial requirements 2025

¹ Financial requirement for MCO Panama in 2025, including requirements for the operations and activities in its area of responsibility in Central America and the Caribbean.

² The percentage funded is indicative.

UNHCR RESPONSE

UNHCR collaborates with the Government, civil society, UN agencies, refugees, and asylum-seekers in Belize. A partnership with the Refugees Department (RD) helps channel support and strengthen the country's asylum system. UNHCR works in partnership with Help for Progress (HfP), HUMANA People to People Belize (Humana), and the Human Rights Commission of Belize (HRCB).



Humanitarian Assistance | UNHCR, HfP, and Humana assisted 19 refugees and asylum-seekers: one received temporary shelter, and 18 received mental health and psychosocial support.



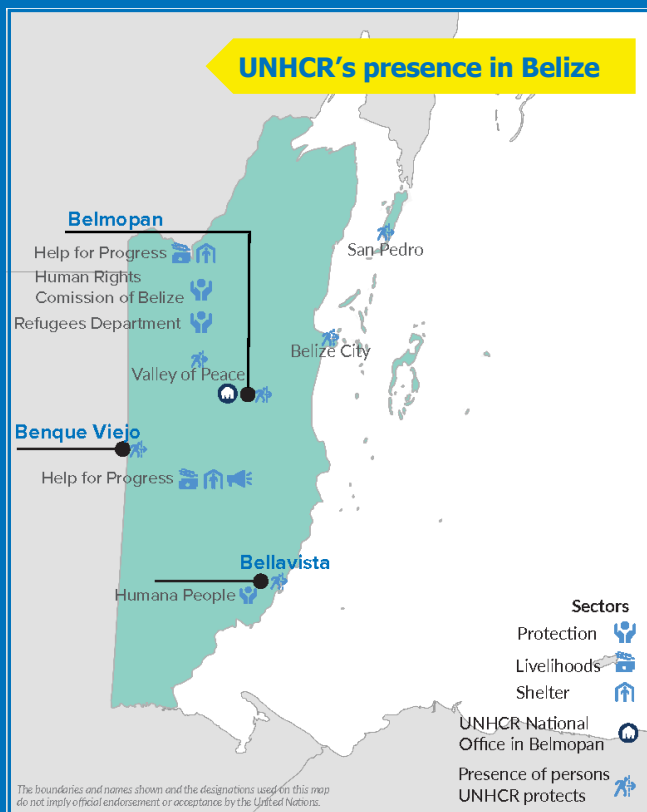
Protection | UNHCR's partners, HRCB, HfP, and Humana counselled 74 people on the asylum system and access to fundamental rights.



Advocacy | Belize hosted the National Agriculture and Trade Show (**NATS**) in Belmopan, highlighting local businesses and innovative products while promoting social, economic, and environmental initiatives. The Ministry of Immigration, through the Refugee Department, engaged with the public to share information on asylum procedures, immigration policies, and the Amnesty Programme. UNHCR and its partner Humana counseled forcibly displaced individuals and those at risk of statelessness.



Local Integration | For World Refugee Day, UNHCR and Humana participated in the opening of a new playground in the Bella Vista host community. HUMANA organized a Market Day, where refugees displayed and sold their goods and products, including pupusas, tacos, juices, fruits and vegetables, plants, clothing, and accessories.



UNHCR Panama MCO wishes to convey a special thank you to its donors: Australia | Belgium | Canada | Denmark | the European Union | France | Germany | Ireland | the Republic of Korea | The Kingdom of the Netherlands | Norway | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | the United States of America | World Food Programme | Private donors in the Republic of Korea, and Australia for UNHCR, the Dutch Postcode Lottery, España con ACNUR, and Japan for UNHCR.

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