

Cuba

April-June 2025

Key Figures

**185**

Refugees and asylum-seekers from **11 countries** are under UNHCR's mandate.

**45 per cent**

Lack legal status in the country, and **33 per cent** are women and children.

**55**

Refugees need resettlement. Most are from Syria, Palestine, Russia, Afghanistan, Haiti, Sudan, Yemen and Iran.

Context

Cuba is not a state party to international refugee instruments. UNHCR ensures refugees are protected against refoulement and granted access to essential services, conducting refugee status determination (RSD) under mandate and searching for durable solutions in the country.

In mid-2024 the **National Assembly** approved new **immigration** and **citizenship** legislation introducing a humanitarian residency for refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless individuals. The laws have yet to enter into force, making this group entirely reliant on UNHCR assistance and resettlement.

Cuba's ongoing economic difficulties, characterized by high inflation, partial dollarization, electricity shortages, and a lack of essential goods, food, medicine, and fuel, continue to impact critical segments of the population, including forcibly displaced people.

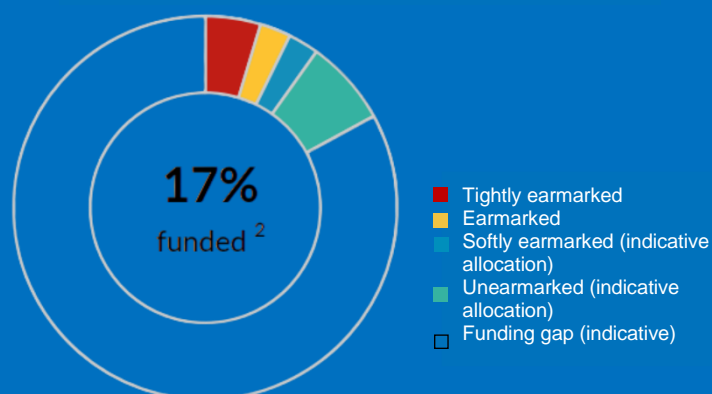
Authorities announced that six new **solar power** stations would be installed to support the National Electric System's recovery. This initiative aims to generate 2012 MW of power, as several power units and generation plants remain offline due to breakdowns, maintenance, or fuel shortages, resulting in daily power losses.

For World Refugee Day, UNHCR Cuba trained volunteers from the Cuban Red Cross (CRC). This training provided them with practical tools and knowledge to strengthen response and support for refugees and asylum-seekers, as CRC staff work directly with these communities nationwide.



Regional Funding Overview

as of 30 June 2025

**\$53.4 million**

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

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is UNHCR's official counterpart in Cuba. UNHCR collaborates with the Ministry of Education, Public Health, Foreign Trade and International Collaboration, and the Cuban Red Cross. Several academic institutions, such as the University of Havana and the Group of International Humanitarian Law Studies, disseminate information related to International Refugee Law.



Advocacy | UNHCR advocates for Cuba's accession to international refugee and statelessness instruments and supports measures to improve access to rights and services. The Agency raises refugee awareness, disseminating International Refugee Law and principles among government institutions, NGOs, and academia, to promote a refugee-sensitive approach.



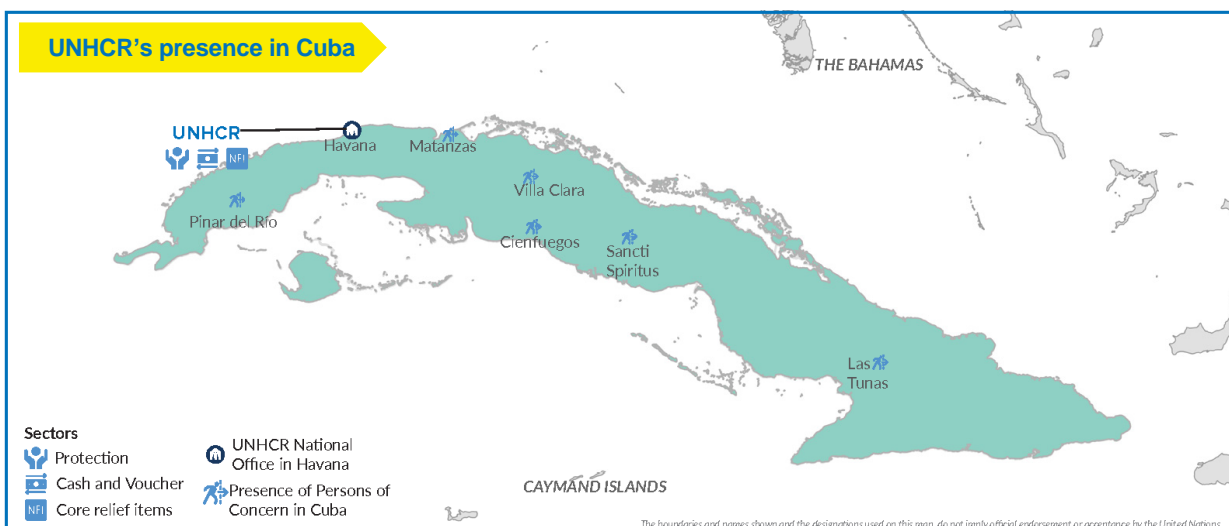
Protection | UNHCR counseled 367 refugees and asylum-seekers on RSD procedures, durable solutions, and access to health and education. UNHCR continued to support refugees in their resettlement process to Canada. UNHCR met and coordinated with Canada's Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC), to facilitate interviews for 28 refugees at the Canadian Embassy in Cuba. These individuals are now awaiting the next steps in their process.



Direct Assistance to Cover Basic Needs | Many refugees and asylum-seekers cannot access employment and secure livelihoods, and have limited income-generating alternatives. UNHCR conducts activities to ensure their safety and access to basic needs. From April to June, UNHCR provided monthly direct assistance to 75 people, ensuring their basic needs and shelter were met.



Education and Training Opportunities | Thanks to verbal agreements with the Government, refugees, and asylum-seekers can access free primary and secondary education (six refugee children were enrolled in school). Ninety-four young refugees can access different study levels, including university, through government or self-financed scholarships.



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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