

# Belize

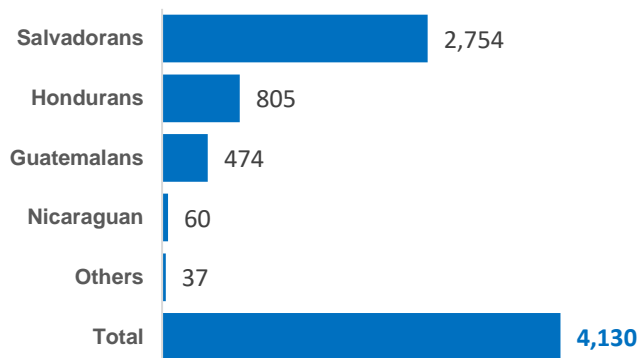
May-June 2022

Belize is home to **approximately 4,130 refugees and asylum-seekers**, mostly from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.

**Forty-five people** received **legal assistance** and **97** received support with their **amnesty application** for a complementary protection path.

A total of **232 refugees and asylum seekers** accessed **livelihoods and life skills training sessions** to enhance **their self-reliance and local integration opportunities**.

## Population of concern\*



\* Data includes registered refugees and asylum-seekers (active and non-active).  
Source: Refugees Department, as of 28 February 2022

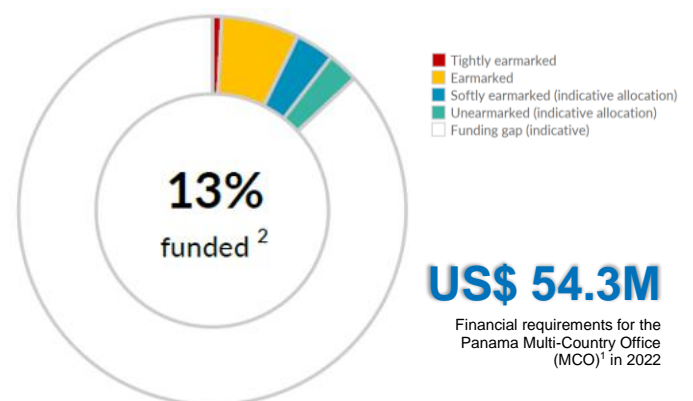
## CONTEXT

COVID-19 restrictions have been further eased, with the removal of mandatory use of masks and curfew, as well as full reopening of schools. By the end of May, the vaccination of children between the ages of 5 to 11 started, **including refugees and asylum-seekers**.

As of 30 June, Belize has registered a cumulative number of 63,795 COVID-19 cases and 679 COVID-19-related deaths. By the end of June, 62 per cent of the population received at least one dose of the vaccine, and 49 per cent were fully vaccinated.

The Government has announced that the **amnesty program for asylum-seekers and migrants** will commence on 2 August 2022 and individuals can apply for their appointment online starting on 1 July 2022. This will allow UNHCR persons of concern a complementary protection path by **granting permanent residency**, including for those who were denied their asylum claims in the past.

## STATE OF PLAY: FUNDING RECEIVED VS. FUNDING NEEDS (AS OF 5 JULY 2022)



<sup>1</sup> The financial requirements for the Panama MCO include requirements for the Coronavirus Emergency and the Venezuela Situation. **Belize** is part of the **Panama Multi-Country Office** since 2021 along with Panama, Nicaragua, Cuba and the Southern Caribbean.

<sup>2</sup> The percentage funded includes indicative allocations of softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions.

## World Refugee Day in Belize



*UNHCR and Belizean influencers joined asylum seekers in a dance video highlighting World Refugee Day. The video also celebrates the Government's new amnesty exercise for which asylum seekers are eligible to apply.*

## Asylum Seekers Graduate from ITVET

*With support from UNHCR and HUMANA, 10 asylum-seekers completed their education at the Stann Creek Institute of Technical Vocational and Educational Training (ITVET) and graduated with a certificate equivalent to a high school diploma.*



## UNHCR Response and Strategy


UNHCR works in close coordination with the Government, civil society, UN agencies, refugees, and asylum-seekers in Belize. A partnership with the Refugees Department helps channel support and continues strengthening the asylum system in the country. Additionally, UNHCR works in partnership with Help for Progress (HfP), HUMANA People to People Belize (Humana), and the Human Rights Commission of Belize (HRCB). UNHCR supports the government in implementing its commitments under the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS).


## Main Activities


Alongside the government, partner organizations, civil society, development actors, and UN Agencies, UNHCR undertakes protection and solutions activities, including:


 **Protection** | UNHCR and partner Human Rights Commission of Belize (HRCB) assisted **45 asylum-seekers** and **other people in need** with **legal services** and supported **97 asylum-seekers** and **other people in need** with their application for the amnesty program offered and led by the Government.


 **Cash-based Interventions and Assistance** | UNHCR provided **cash assistance** to **224 refugees** and **asylum-seekers** to enhance access to food, medicine, documents, and other basic needs.


 **Durable Solutions and Livelihoods** | UNHCR and HUMANA delivered **livelihood** and **skills training courses** to **232 asylum-seekers** to build self-reliance and skills in carpentry, sewing, mentorship, music, and English as a second language (ESL). The training seeks to promote and enhance local integration within the Belizean communities.

 **Advocacy and Public Information** | On **World Refugee Day**, UNHCR published a **video** celebrating refugees' and asylum seekers' hope on the Government's Amnesty process while promoting inclusion, solidarity, and empathy.

 **Community-based Protection** | In Bella Vista village, UNHCR with the support of the community-based protection network *Manos Unidas* and partner HUMANA organized **Run with Refugees**, a 5 km marathon to celebrate **World Refugee Day and inclusion for all**. **Thirty locals and asylum seekers**, many of them children, participated in the run which was followed by a ceremony and a fair. **Over 80 members of the community** took part in this initiative.

 **Mental Health and Psychosocial Services** | Between May and June 2022, UNHCR delivered psychosocial support through partners Help for Progress and HUMANA People to People to **25 refugees and asylum-seekers**. This psychosocial assistance is helping them to work through the traumas faced as a result of their forced displacement, gender-based violence, and exploitation experiences.

 **Education and Training Opportunities** | With the support of UNHCR and partner Humana, **10 asylum-seekers** enrolled in Math, English as a Second Language, Life Skills, and Information Technology courses at Stann Creek ITVET (a local vocational training institute) graduated at the end of June with a **certificate equivalent to a high school diploma**.

 **Capacity Building** | UNHCR trained **16 government officials**, including the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Immigration, the Director of the Refugees Department, Refugee Eligibility Committee members, and 5 eligibility clerks for **Refugee Status Determination procedure, inclusion and credibility assessment, internal flight relocation, and exclusion**.

UNHCR Panama MCO wishes to convey a special thank you to its donors: Canada, the European Union, France, United States of America, 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 | Denmark | France | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom. Private donors in Australia | Canada | Germany | Italy | Japan | Republic of Korea | Spain | and the United States

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