

Belize



July - September 2024

Key Figures



1,774

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



200

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



69

Asylum-seekers received cash-based assistance from UNHCR to access health care, documentation, and shelter.

Context

Under Belize's Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) [Pro-Tempore Presidency](#), UNHCR provides technical and financial assistance in local government meetings, capacity-building sessions, and regional workshops. The Agency supported Belize's participation in the MIRPS [Capacity Development](#) Workshop and the II Cities of Solidarity National Conference, held in Panama and Guatemala, respectively.

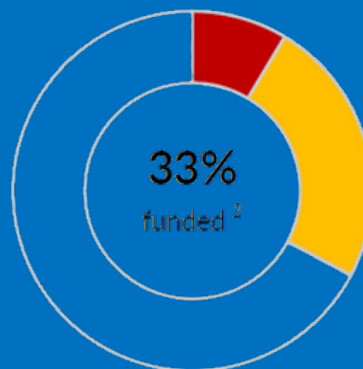
Since February, the government has issued permanent residency cards to asylum-seekers who applied through the Amnesty Programme. By the end of the third quarter, Belize had granted Amnesty to some 380 asylum-seekers, and 113 received their IDs with UNHCR's support.

The U.S. State Department's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs visited Belize and applauded the country's [leadership](#) on lawful pathways, regularization processes, and temporary work programs, stating that Belize is a best practice in the region.

In September, UNHCR's partner, the Human Rights Commission of Belize (HRCB), conducted a two-day Mobile Legal Clinic to provide essential services to vulnerable groups, particularly refugee and asylum-seeking families needing legal support.

Regional funding Overview

as of 30 September 2024



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

\$56.1 million¹

UNHCR's financial requirements 2024

¹ Financial requirement for the Panama MCO in 2024 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 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).



Coordination with local authorities | UNHCR trained 10 Government officials in preparation for the Good Practice Implementation Project (GPIP) survey, a MIRPS initiative to enhance economic integration. UNHCR supported the RD in opening their Benque Viejo Information Center to identify and refer people with specific needs. The Agency trained the RD staff on Refugee Status Determination (RSD) to conduct assessments and identify individuals with international protection needs. UNHCR and partners held a Documentation Clinic where 133 persons accessed information from the Guatemalan and Salvadoran embassies, the Social Security Board, the Labour Department, and the Amnesty, and obtained assistance with birth registration applications.



Protection | In Bella Vista and Valley of Peace, UNHCR, partners, and the refugee-led organization, 'I Hope,' held Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention focus-group discussions with 21 refugees, asylum-seekers, and host community members.



Education | UNHCR donated coloring books, sketchbooks, children's story books, and art supplies to the Las Flores Library in Belmopan to support its summer program, in which 40 local and refugee children participated. UNHCR donated a printer, ink, whiteboards, and other supplies to a southern Belize primary school that hosts refugees, asylum-seekers, and Indigenous communities.



Local Integration | UNHCR partners HfP and HUMANA launched livelihood courses to promote the economic and social integration of refugees, asylum-seekers, and host community members. One hundred thirty-three refugees and asylum-seekers are attending the courses, 81 of which are new to the programs. UNHCR met with the Valley of Peace village community leaders to re-establish its community-based protection volunteer group (CBPN). Participants agreed to the initiative.



BELIZE HOLDS AMNESTY CEREMONY FOR ASYLUM-SEEKERS

On 2 September, UNHCR participated in an [Amnesty ceremony](#), where authorities granted [seven asylum-seekers](#) their [permanent residency](#).

"With their new [permanent residency](#), asylum-seekers—who viewed Belize as a place to rebuild their lives—can now fully integrate and contribute to the country's vibrant and diverse society," stated José Samaniego, UNHCR Regional Director for the Americas.

UNHCR Panama MCO wishes to convey a special thank you to its donors: Australia | Belgium | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Guyana | Ireland | Republic of Korea | The Kingdom of the Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | United States of America | Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS | Private donors from Italy, the Republic of Korea and the Netherlands, Australia for UNHCR, España con ACNUR, Japan for UNHCR, Sweden for UNHCR, the Dutch Postcode Lottery, and UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe.

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UNHCR's presence in Belize

