FACT SHEET

Aruba & Curaçao

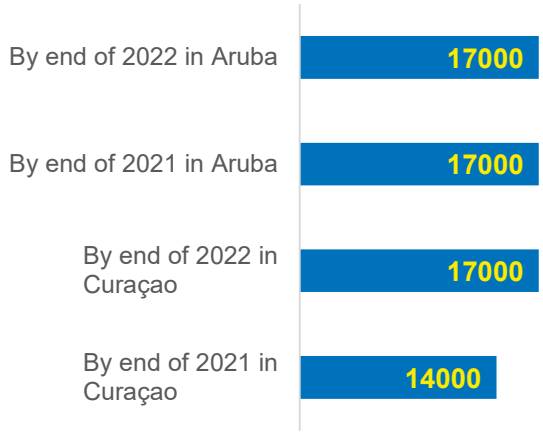
November - December 2022

Aruba and Curaçao host the largest number of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the world compared to their local population, ranking first and third, with 159 and 102 displaced people per 1,000 inhabitants, respectively.

In 2022, UNHCR assisted some 11,800 people with primary health care consultations in Curaçao.

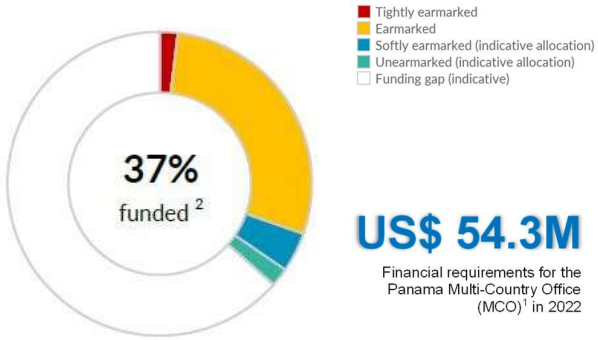
UNHCR provided legal assistance to 138 people in Aruba and Curacao throughout 2022. Through partner Human Rights Defense Curacao (HRDC), a total of 88 appeal proceedings were filed.

People UNHCR protects



** Source: Estimates as per the RMRP 2023-24*

FUNDING (AS OF 29 DECEMBER 2022)



US$ 54.3M

Financial requirements for the Panama Multi-Country Office (MCO)[1] in 2022

[1] The financial requirements for the Panama MCO include those for the Coronavirus Emergency and the Venezuela Situation. **Aruba and Curaçao** are part of the **Panama Multi-Country Office** since 2021 along with Panama, Belize, Nicaragua, Cuba and the Southern Caribbean.

[2] The percentage funded includes indicative allocations of softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions.

CONTEXT

While many Venezuelans arrived on the islands as tourists or with an initial permit, many overstayed and remain irregularly, without access to public health care and social services. The 1967 Protocol and the 1951 Refugee Convention apply to Aruba. However, Curaçao does not consider itself bound by this instrument, and this often exposes Venezuelans to abuse, exploitation, and detention. COVID-19 and the ensuing economic situation have further exacerbated these risks and vulnerabilities, as livelihoods became difficult to secure. Both Aruba and Curaçao have included refugees and migrants in COVID-19 vaccination campaigns to help curb the spread of the virus.

Considering the small size and limited absorption capacity of both islands, UNHCR continues to engage with partners to facilitate access to legal counselling and legal assistance, primary healthcare, assistance to more vulnerable refugees and migrants - including survivors of gender-based violence - integration, peaceful co-existence, and self-reliance.

16 Days of activism in Aruba and Curacao

Round table discussion in Curacao

She's Gone Project in Aruba

In Curacao, UNHCR, together with IOM and the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) organized a Roundtable on Access to Justice for GBV survivors, to serve as a platform for capacity building and collaboration with Governmental Institutions.

In Aruba, UNHCR and partners invited the Israeli artist Keren Goldstein, to showcase her exhibit "She's Gone", an art installation that displays the clothes of women victims of femicide. UNHCR and the local organization Fundación Contra Violencia Relacional (FCVR) hosted "Stop the Beating", a theatre play on child abuse by the storyteller Archell Thompson.

UNHCR Response and Strategy

UNHCR works with one partner in Aruba and two in Curaçao and supports both States in delivering assistance and protection to refugees and asylum seekers. UNHCR works in coordination with four partners in the Aruba R4V platform and ten partners in the Curaçao R4V platform to respond to education, food security, health, integration, protection, shelter, WASH, and gender-based violence (GBV) among others. See the R4V Subregional portal for more information.

Main Activities

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

Protection | UNHCR counselled 47 people on legal status, humanitarian assistance, health, resettlement, and other inquiries through the Agency's helpline and accountability email. UNHCR's partner HIAS screened 93 individuals identifying 28 persons with specific needs. Through cash-based interventions, HIAS assisted 22 Venezuelans, all of them first-time recipients, and supported 54 through food vouchers. In Curaçao, UNHCR initiated an inter-agency child protection assessment with 29 children and 27 parents/caregivers to identify the needs, gaps, and challenges of undocumented refugee and migrant children.

Legal Assistance | UNHCR provided legal assistance to 20 individuals of which, four cases were submitted to the court for procedures pertaining to detention, deportation, and asylum procedures. UNHCR and partner Human Rights Defense Curacao (HRDC) made 63 calls to the Immigration Detention Facility and made two visits throughout these months. Three procedures were submitted concerning international protection via Article 3 of the European Court of Human Rights[1].

Health | Through Foundation *Salù pa Tur* (SPT), UNHCR provided 929 primary health care consultations, as well as reproductive, prenatal, and maternity care, HIV, diabetes, and hypertension care for undocumented refugees and migrants in Curaçao. SPT also conducted two community outreach events and distributed diapers / hygiene pads and condoms, providing glucose and blood pressure checks. In Aruba, UNHCR established an agreement with an insurance company to develop an insurance plan for undocumented refugees and migrants. To commemorate International World AIDS Day (1 December), UNHCR together with HIAS conducted an awareness campaign throughout which a total of 700 flyers and 3,888 condoms were distributed reaching almost 1,000 individuals in the community.

Community-based Protection (CBP) | UNHCR partner HIAS launched the anti-xenophobia campaign "*Chamo Mi Ta Bo Ruman*" on social media, focusing on the local integration of refugees and migrants in Aruba. HIAS also organized a 5-session workshop where participants could express themselves through art and receive psychosocial support. To commemorate the International Day of the Rights of the Child, UNHCR and HIAS organized a "Know Your Rights" game day for children.UNHCR also supported CuraPlus Foundation, which provides counselling and awareness-raising activities for people living with HIV. The Agency supported *Bos di Hubentut Group* with sexual education materials for children in Curaçao, and the *Respeta Mi* Foundation with awareness raising materials on child abuse prevention. UNHCR supported ADRA Curacao with promotion materials for the "Computer Course for Individual Development" project. This project targets refugees and migrants to improve job opportunities for the participants and their social integration. Local NGOs partner Venex Curacao also developed a project to train a group of refugee and migrant women on cosmetic techniques for their integration into the formal labour market. The Agency donated VeneAruba one digital board and one printer for an education project targeting the refugee and migrant community.

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

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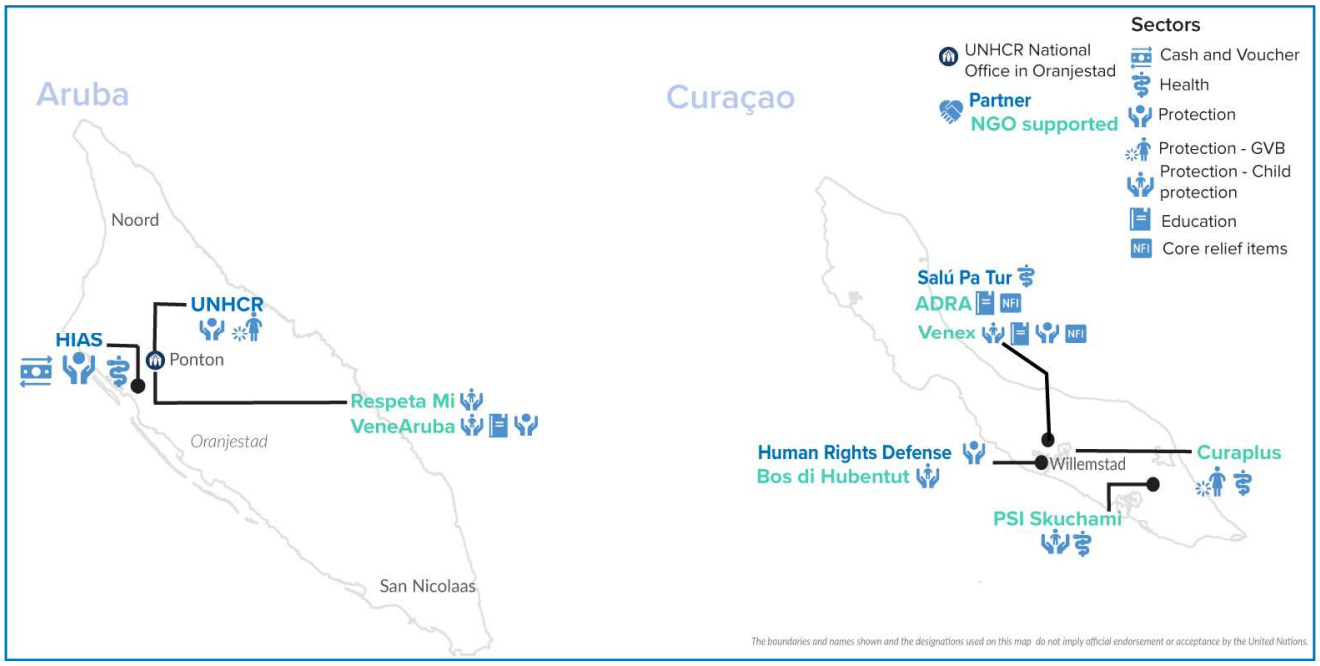
[1] Article 3 EctHR is the national procedure – only pathway – for individuals to seek international protection in Curacao. It entails protection against torture and inhuman or degrading treatment.

UNHCR presence in Aruba and Curaçao