

Belize

January-February 2023

Key Figures

Approximately



4,130

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



103

Asylum-seekers received humanitarian assistance during this period to enhance their access to food, shelter, health, and other basic needs



37

Refugees and asylum-seekers were assisted with livelihood training and support to enhance local integration and boost self-reliance.

Context

UNHCR supports the Government of Belize in strengthening the asylum system, establishing protection policies, and facilitating durable solutions to assist asylum-seekers and refugees.

UNHCR works with national partners to offer asylum-seekers and refugees humanitarian aid, including food and medical assistance, livelihoods training, legal counsel, and psychosocial support.

In 2021, the Government announced the launch of an Amnesty program for asylum-seekers and migrants as an alternative protection pathway to regularize their legal status and obtain permanent residency.

The registration phase of Amnesty started on 2 August 2022. In February 2023, the Government extended this period until 31, March 2023, for those eligible who could not apply.

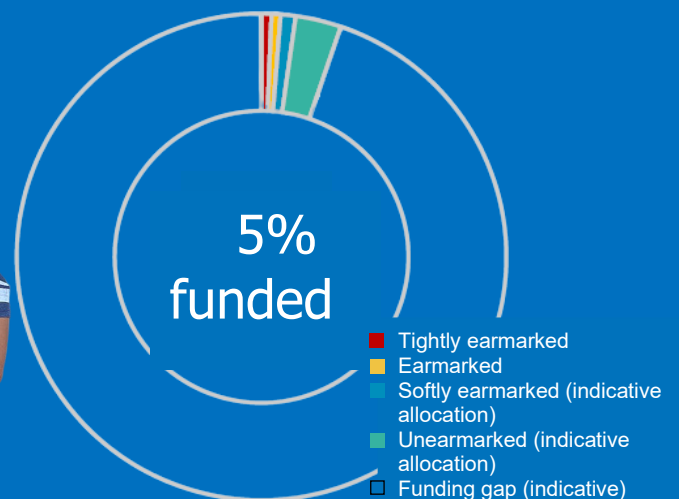
UNHCR supports eligible asylum-seekers to achieve permanent residence via Amnesty. According to official figures, as of the end of February, over 12,700 people have applied.

UNHCR donated office equipment and supplies to the refugee-led organization 'I HOPE'. The donation increases their capacity to implement protection and local integration initiatives in Belmopan.



Regional funding Overview

as of February 28th, 2023



\$55.4 million
UNHCR's financial requirements 2023

¹ Financial requirement for the Panama MCO in 2023 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 closely 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).



Protection | UNHCR and partner HRCB assisted 29 asylum-seekers with legal aid, including asylum-seekers in detention. UNHCR's national partners, HRCB, HfP, and HUMANA People to People, jointly supported 21 asylum-seekers with their application for the Government's Amnesty programme during the reporting period.



Humanitarian Assistance | UNHCR through HfP provided humanitarian assistance to 103 refugees and asylum seekers. A total of 51 refugees and asylum-seekers were supported with vouchers to enhance their access to food, 29 were supported with temporary shelter, 13 were assisted with core-relief items, and seven received support to access documentation.



Durable Solutions and Livelihoods | UNHCR and HUMANA delivered livelihood and skills training courses to 17 asylum seekers to build financial accounting and jewelry design skills. The training seeks to promote and enhance local integration within host communities. In addition, 20 asylum-seekers participated in a Market Day organized by HUMANA in Bella Vista with their products and services.



Information and support | UNHCR led a workshop with the media to brief them on the importance of using the correct terminology in the news, such as the difference between asylum-seekers, refugees, and migrants. Participants in the workshop were briefed on international and national laws on forcibly displaced people and UNHCR work and mandate globally and in Belize.



Information session at the University of Belize

At the invitation of the University of Belize, UNHCR led an information session for 11 students on forced displacement and the work of UNHCR in Belize. Additional workshops for academia will follow, and coordination with partners is ongoing to create a network of volunteer students.

UNHCR Panama MCO wishes to convey a special thank you to its donors: the European Union, the United States of America, and the UN Programme on HIV/AIDS. We also thank the fundamental support provided by public and private donors who have contributed to UNHCR with unearmarked and softly earmarked funds: Belgium | Canada | Denmark | Germany | Ireland Japan | Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland |

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UNHCR's presence in Belize

