

## HIGHLIGHTS



2,526

Migrants sheltered  
at the MRS



172%

Overcapacity in  
Migration Stations nationwide



72

Pregnant  
women



30%

Children and  
adolescents under 17



4

Unaccompanied children  
and adolescents under 17



18

Cases of COVID-19 have been identified  
by community transmission in Darién



No reported arrivals of migrants  
in Bajo Chiquito since 29 March 2020



Transit population is not ruled out  
through the Darién National Park



67

Recovered cases  
of COVID-19

## METHODOLOGY

The information contained in this report is collected by IOM Panama staff in Darién and Chiriquí, through field monitoring, multi-sectoral assessments through key informants, as well as regular information exchange at the technical level, and at the central level of the United Nations Inter-Agency Group on Human Mobility. This group is co-led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), where agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system in Panama are currently actively participating, such as: United Nations Office for the Coordination of

Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The Inter-Agency Group on Human Mobility coordinates actions at the national level to complement the efforts of the Government of Panama to address the challenges of managing human mobility from a dignified, humane, safe, orderly and regular manner.

## CONTEXT OF THE SITUATION

The Darién region has been characterized as one of the most important points of transit for extra-regional migrants for the past eleven years. However, the Darién region is characterized as one of the most challenging for Panama's socio-economic development; a situation that increases the complexity of dealing with massive and irregular migration flows.

Since 2009, significant extra-regional migration flows have been identified, that is, migrants from other continents, such as Africa, Asia and the Caribbean region, specifically Haitians and Cubans.

In 2016, the first migration crisis by extra-regionals occurred in the province of Darién, influenced by the closing of borders in Costa Rica and Nicaragua. Faced with this situation, the governments of Panama and Costa Rica established an agreement known as 'Operation Controlled Flow', that would guarantee the orderly, regular and safe transit of these migrants through the territory.

The World Health Organization declared a state of pandemic for the

COVID-19 virus on 11 March 2020, which is why global sanitary measures were established in order to mitigate the contagion. Central America, responded by shutting its borders or by modifying its border management policies, as well as launching massive hygiene campaigns. The application of these measures implied changes in the mobility of migrants transiting through Panama. In addition, organizations such as SICA have drawn up regional work plans for the contingency of the pandemic.

Since 12 March 2020, Panama has been under a state of emergency, with closed borders, as a result of the measures imposed to contain the virus. Due to the closing of the Costa Rican borders on 16 March, Operation Controlled Flow has been severely affected. Currently, there are 2,526 migrants stranded in the national territory, distributed as follows: in the migrant stations of the province of Darién there are 1,674 in MRS La Peñita, 124 in Bajo Chiquito, and 187 in MRS

Lajas Blancas, and 541 migrants in the province of Chiriquí at MRS Los Planes. Borders continue to be closed until 22 June according to provisions from the Government of Panama.

As of May 28, Panama has 12,131 confirmed cases and a total of 320 deaths. In terms of border provinces, Darién reports a total of 203 cases and Chiriquí a total of 321 positive.

The Government of Panama continues with the plan for the gradual reopening of the country through 6 blocks. The second block will begin on Monday, 1 June, with the reopening of infrastructure construction, non-metallic mining, places of worship, parks, sports and social areas with a maximum holding capacity of 25%, as well as allowing sports activities that do not involve physical contact.

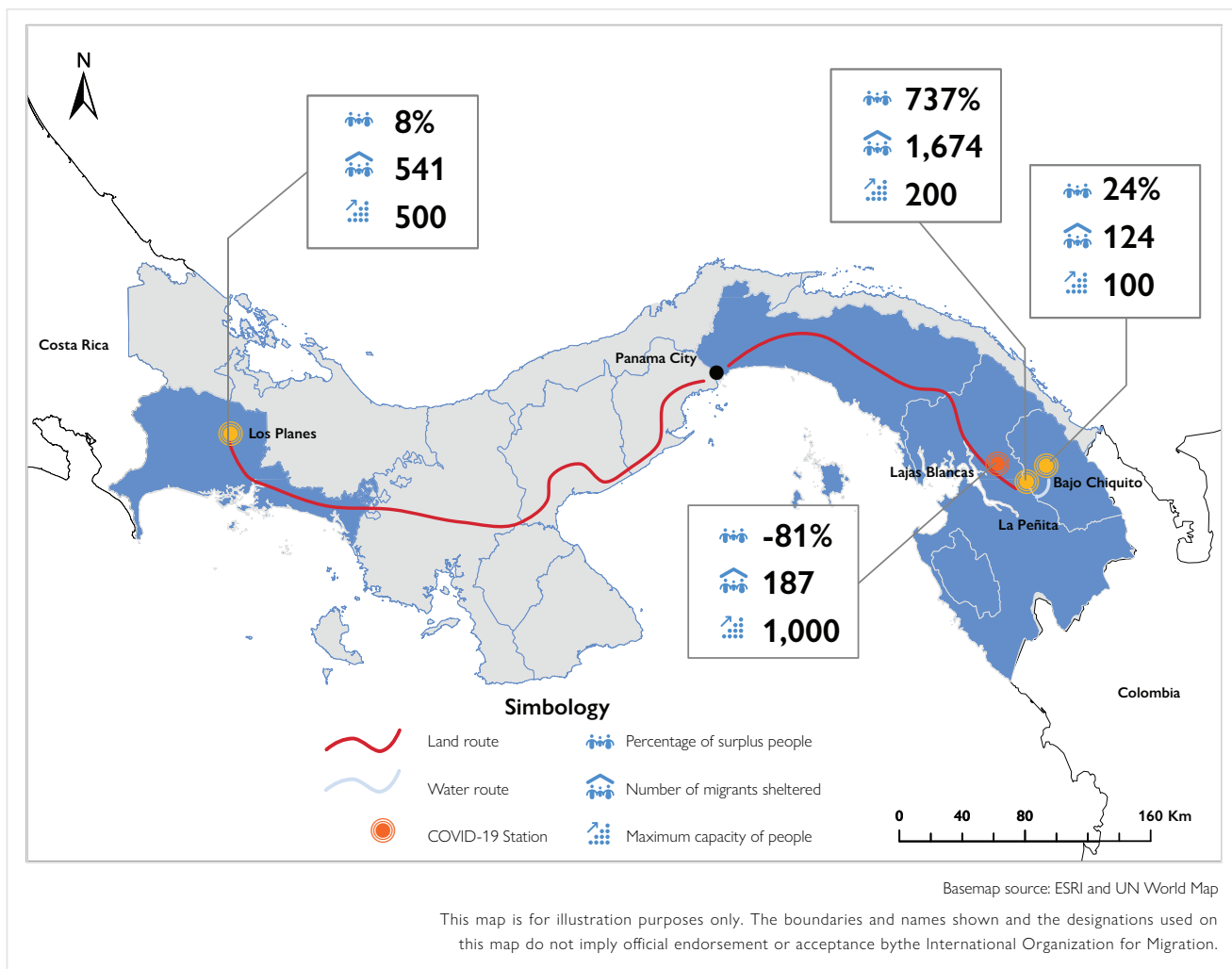
Start dates for subsequent phases have yet to be announced. From that date on, mobility by gender and time will change to a general curfew which will take effect from 7:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. Sanitary fences and epidemic areas will be maintained, as well as the mandatory use of masks, hand sanitizer and frequent hand washing. Since the beginning of community transmission of COVID-19 in Darién

at MRS La Peñita, no serious cases have been reported; patients with moderate virus disease have been managed under a stay-at-home/hospital protocol in Panama City. At the time of writing this report, 18 positive COVID-19 cases have been reported (6 currently in Panama City for being moderate cases), 67 recovered cases, and 102 remain at MRS Lajas Blancas because of possible contacts. Land preparation has started at Nicanor to setup a MRS.

After past demonstrations by stranded migrants, the atmosphere at the MRS in Darién remains stable. The National Border Service (SENAFRONT by its Spanish acronym) has encouraged dialogue and promoted recreational activities for the adult population, such as a soccer championship: The Migrant Cup.

At MRS Los Planes de Gualaca in Chiriquí, the health situation has not changed much, and monitoring is maintained for people with conditions that warrant constant medical observation. Trips to withdraw money have been resumed. So far, zero cases of COVID-19 have been reported at MRS Los Planes.

## SHELTERED POPULATION AT MIGRANT RECEIVING STATIONS



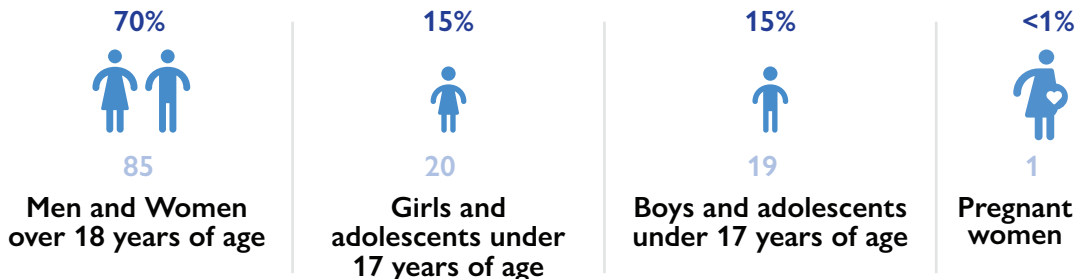
## STATISTICS ON THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED IN THE COMMUNITY OF BAJO CHIQUITO

28 MAY 2020

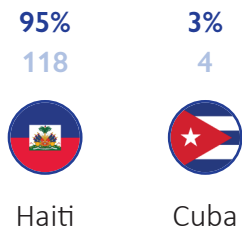
SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA



124  
Sheltered  
migrants

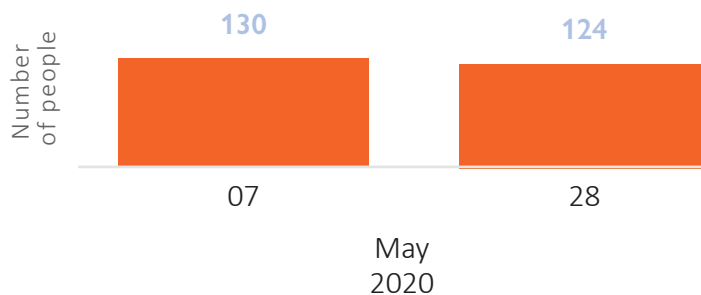


### HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



The remaining 2% corresponds to different nationalities from various countries in South America.

### NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT BAJO CHIQUITO, MAY 2020



### COVID-19 CASE STATISTICS



0

No cases of COVID19 have been identified in the migration flow

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN THE COMMUNITY OF BAJO CHIQUITO

### WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION (WASH)



#### Implemented actions

- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership, the distribution of 24,000 liters of potable water is maintained. Including the assistance of a community technician who monitors the system.

### SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



#### Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT posted information signs regarding the current situation of controlled flow and hygiene measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



#### Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT continues to provide food for migrants.

### PROTECTION



#### Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains units that protects the community.

### HEALTH



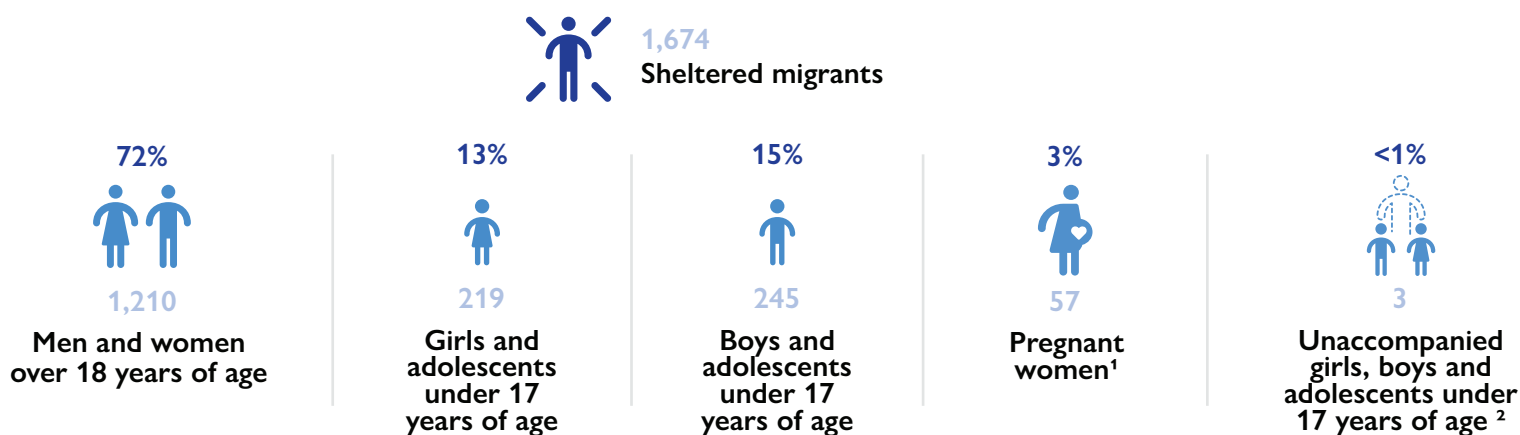
#### Implemented actions

- The Ministry of Health (MINSA by its Spanish acronym) continues monitoring potential COVID-19 cases.

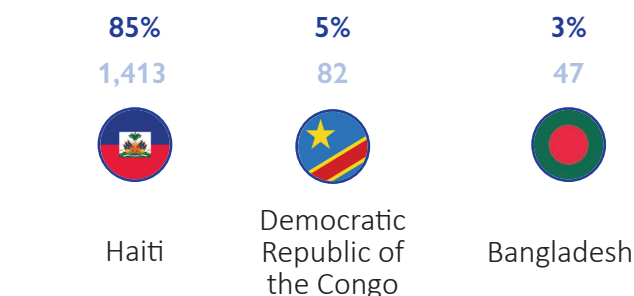
## STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LA PEÑITA

28 MAY 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

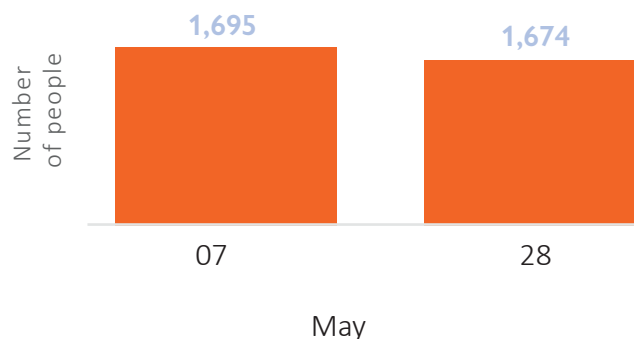


### HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES

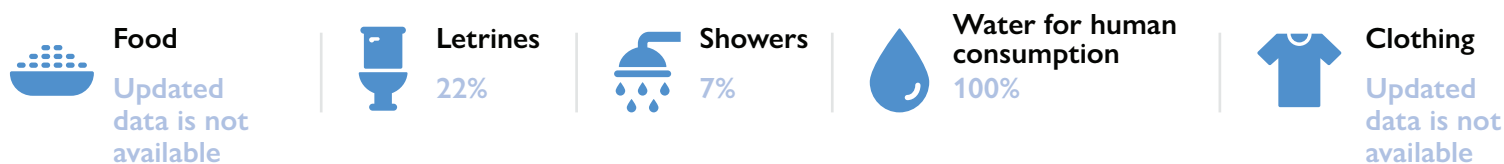


The remaining 8% corresponds to 28 nationalities from various countries in Africa, South Asia, Central and South America.

### NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LA PEÑITA, MAY 2020



### SERVICES PROVIDED AND AVAILABLE AT MRS LA PEÑITA DURING THE PANDEMIC COMPARED TO MINIMUM HUMANITARIAN STANDARDS



### COVID-19 CASE STATISTICS

**Updated data is not available**  
**Cases spread by community transmission at MRS La Peñita**

These individuals and their contacts have been transferred to MRS Lajas Blancas, which has been temporarily authorized to attend COVID-19 positive cases at Darién, as part of the health care protocol implemented in Panama. These statistics are accounted for within MRS Lajas Blancas data.

<sup>1</sup> Data included women over 18 years of age. The updated registration is currently being carried out under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership.

<sup>2</sup> Data included girls, boys and adolescents under 17 years of age.

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AT MRS LA PEÑITA

### WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION (WASH)



#### Implemented actions

- MINSa in coordination with SENAFRONT fumigated the MRS facilities.
- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership framework , four technicians are still presently monitoring the water, sanitation and hygiene distribution system.

### FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



#### Implemented actions

- IOM in coordination with SENAFRONT, promoted creating a Migrant "Feeding Table", with the engagement of the Apostolic Vicariate of Darién, the National Secretariat for the Defense of Afro-Panamanians (SENADAP), SENAFRONT and IOM.

### SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



#### Implemented actions

- The National Migration Service (NMS) delivered pieces of clothing.
- UNICEF purchased 575 mats, and SENAFRONT plans to distribute and deliver them to migrants in the upcoming weeks.
- SENAFRONT has posted information signs on the current situation of the Operation Controlled Flow and hygiene measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### HEALTH



#### Implemented actions

- MINSa maintains the systematic collection of samples (swabs) from migrants to identify COVID-19 cases.
- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership, children at risk of malnutrition are being monitored.
- SENAFRONT launched The Migrant Cup football championship to promote recreational activities among the migrant population.
- IOM delivered to MINSa two sample collection (swabbing) booths for the detection of COVID-19.
- MINSa medically attended 537 migrants.
- UNFPA donated condoms to the migrant population.

### PROTECTION



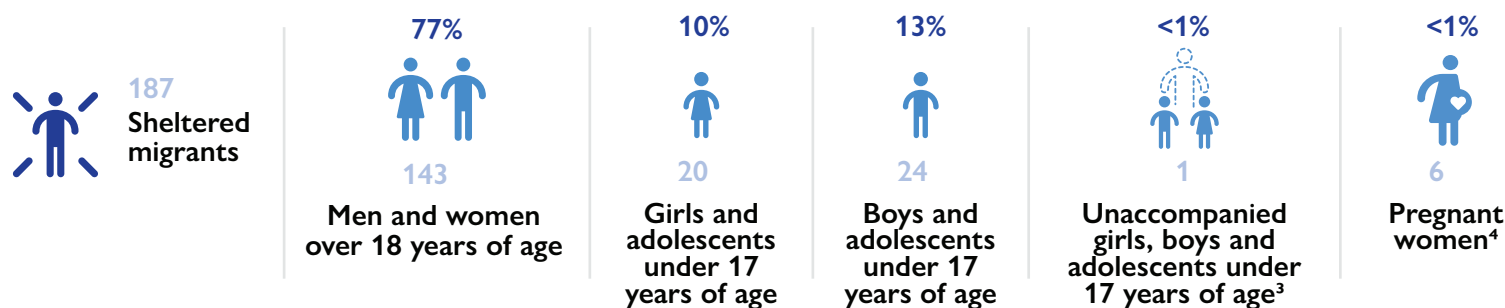
#### Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains units that provide safety and order in the community.
- UNICEF followed up with SENNIAF regarding the protection of three unaccompanied adolescents.
- MINSa in coordination with UNFPA, PAHO and UNICEF are making progress on a protocol agreement and a route for critical care to attend women in the process of childbirth and postpartum.
- The Municipality of Pinogana, has been monitoring local stores in the community of La Peñita for price gouging control.

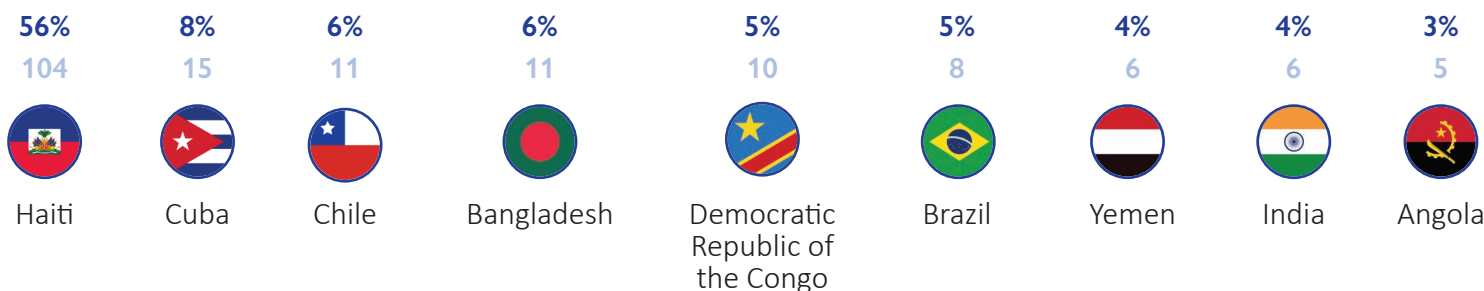
## STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS

28 MAY 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

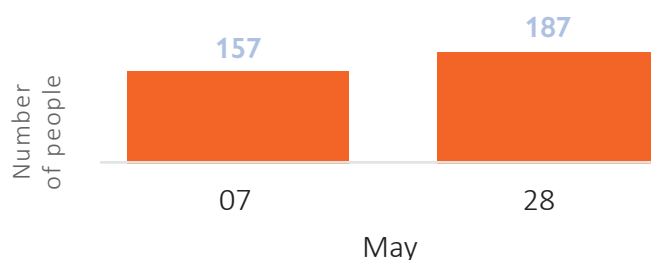


### HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES

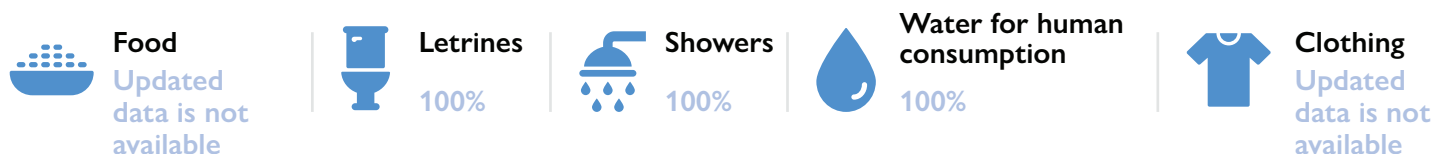


The remaining 3% correspond to nationalities from various countries in South America, South Asia and Africa.

### NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS, MAY 2020



### SERVICES PROVIDED AND AVAILABLE AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS DURING THE PANDEMIC COMPARED TO MINIMUM HUMANITARIAN STANDARDS




<sup>3</sup> Data included in children under 17 years of age.

<sup>4</sup> Data included in women over 18 years of age.

## COVID- 19 CASE STATISTICS

 **18**  
Positive<sup>5</sup>

 **No updated data available**  
Tests applied

 **102**  
Suspected

 **67**  
Recovered

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS

### WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION (WASH)



#### Implemented actions

- MINSAs in coordination with SENAFRONT fumigated the MRS.
- SENAFRONT improved the water distribution system for human consumption. However, the liquid is currently not available for consumption.
- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership, assistance was provided to review the sanitation and water purification processes.
- NMS serviced the emergency generator.
- SENAFRONT continues delivering bottled water to migrants.

#### Identified needs

- The bathrooms and showers do not have running water.
- There are no hand washing stations.

### FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



#### Implemented actions

- The Muslim Community delivered bags of food.
- SENAFRONT delivered milk and juice to pregnant women.
- Dejando Huellas Association delivered food products.

#### Identified needs

- Migrants indicated that food portions are too small.

### SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



#### Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT delivered footballs to promote recreational activities.
- Dejando Huellas Association delivered pieces of clothing.
- UNICEF delivered 25 sleeping mats to migrants.

### PROTECTION



#### Implemented actions

- UNICEF, in coordination with SENNIAF, continues to monitor the unaccompanied adolescent.
- UNHCR, through local partners, has provided information and assistance to the migrant population in accessing the procedure for recognition of refugee status in the Republic of Panama and international protection.

### HEALTH



#### Implemented actions

- IOM delivered a sample collection (swabbing) booth for the detection of COVID-19

<sup>5</sup> Six low-risk migrants are kept in the hotel/hospital in Panama City. This data only compiles active cases.



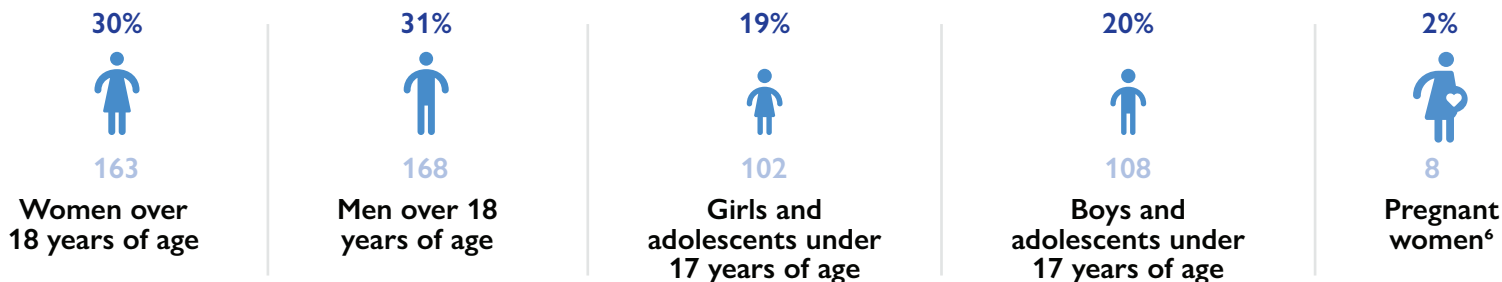
## STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LOS PLANES

19 MAY, 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA



541  
Sheltered migrants

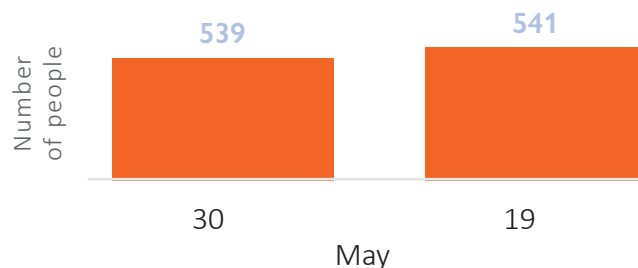


### HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES

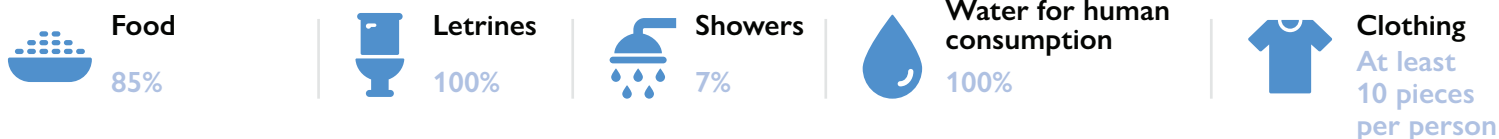
### NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LOS PLANES, MAY 2020



The remaining 8% correspond to 17 nationalities from various countries in South America, Africa, South Asia; as well as minors born in Panama.



### SERVICES PROVIDED AND AVAILABLE AT THE MRS LOS PLANES DURING THE PANDEMIC COMPARED TO MINIMUM HUMANITARIAN STANDARDS



### COVID-19 CASE STATISTICS



0  
No cases of COVID19 have been identified in the migration flow

<sup>6</sup> Data included in the total number of women over 18 years of age

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN MRS LOS PLANES

### WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION (WASH)



#### Implemented actions

- The Mayor's Office of Gualaca continues to operate a backhoe to mitigate the collapse of the solid waste dump.
- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership framework, in coordination with NMS and the Red Cross of Chiriquí, 110 family personal hygiene kits have been delivered .
- IOM is following up with MINSA to coordinate actions for drinking water purification

#### Identified needs

- Promotion of proper hygiene practices.
- Cleaning frequency of latrines must be increased.
- Install hand-washing stations; provided a minimum standard of 1 in 10 inhabitants per shelter, in accordance with Sphere Standard N 6.3 "WASH in health facilities" in order to increase prevention measures.

- UNHCR donated 500 units of cereal for babies, children and adults, 40 boxes of cookies, 20 boxes of juice and 20 boxes of skimmed milk.

### SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



#### Implemented actions

- NMS hired a cleaning company to service the latrines.
- Migrants, NMS and SENAFRONT continue to make minor repairs to the infrastructure.
- IOM arranged with the ROTARAC Club of Panama, a donation of 8,000 pieces of clothing (T-shirts, sweatshirts, pants, skirts, sweatshirts, hats and shirts) of all sizes. This was done with the logistical distribution coordination with NMS.
- UNHCR donated 500 feminine sanitary pads, 250 disposable baby diapers, 300 blankets, 5 packages of toilet paper, 5 packages of powdered detergent and 10 boxes of chlorine and 115 sweaters. In coordination with HAIAS, 3 pumps were donated for fumigation.

#### Identified needs

- Technical support is required to repair the MRS infrastructure.
- There are no gender or age specific bathrooms.
- There is a high risk of fire, because there are pine trees located next to the electrical wiring.
- There is no evacuation plan or emergency contingency measures.
- Six fire extinguishers were found empty and require replacement.

### FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



#### Implemented actions

- NMS maintains milk distribution for children when requested by families.
- NMS is in the process of recruiting someone for logistical support and food preparation.

## PROTECTION



### Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains 8 units that are responsible for maintaining order and protecting the MRS perimeter.
- NMS carries out integration activities among migrants.
- UNHCR donated 70 table games with different themes, 100 Frisbee discs, 50 coloring crayons, 50 children's story books, 50 tempera paints with brushes, 50 units of putty for children and 25 puzzles for children. In coordination with HAIAS, 2 sets of ping-pong tables were donated.

### Identified needs

- There has been an increase in cases of domestic violence among migrants, a situation that is being addressed by the authorities in charge of the MRS.
- NMS identified the need to train staff on how to deal with cases of domestic violence at the MRS and with migrant populations in transit.

## HEALTH



### Implemented actions

- MINSA and NMS are monitoring a premature newborn, a child with leishmaniasis and a woman with hypertension problems. Two of them were transferred to hospitals in the city of David.

### Identified needs

- Migrants have been identified with respiratory diseases, infections, lacerations and headaches.
- MRS Los Planes does not have an ambulance. NMS provides emergency transportation with the MRS patrol vehicle, but it is not outfitted with the minimum standards for emergency transfers, and is intended as a multiple use vehicle, mainly administrative staff procedures.
- There is no access to birth control methods, such as condoms.

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