

HIGHLIGHTS



2,531

Migrants sheltered
at the MRS



172%

Overcapacity in
Migration Stations nationwide



65

Pregnant
women



30%

Children and
adolescents under 17



4

Unaccompanied children
and adolescents under 17



6

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



175

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 2,536 migrants stranded in the national territory, distributed as follows: in the migrant stations of the province of Darién there are 1,671 in MRS La Peñita, 124 in Bajo Chiquito, and 195 in MRS

Lajas Blancas. There are also 5 migrants at MRS Ponuloso, but this specific migration station is not covered in this report. Furthermore, there are 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 4 June, Panama has 15,044 confirmed cases and a total of 363 deaths. In terms of border provinces, Darién reports a total of 237 cases, and Chiriquí a total of 424 positive cases. In this context, the Government of Panama decreed the mandatory use of masks at the national level as of 2 June.

Last Wednesday, 3 June, there was a new protest by migrants at MRS La Peñita. Migrants, as part of their discontent, threatened to cause damage to the MRS. In this situation, the National Border Service (SENAFRONT by its Spanish acronym) conducted a strong operational security deployment. The main demand of migrants is that they should be provided with better conditions at the migration station, mainly in terms of food and access to drinking water, in addition to being allowed to continue their migration journey.

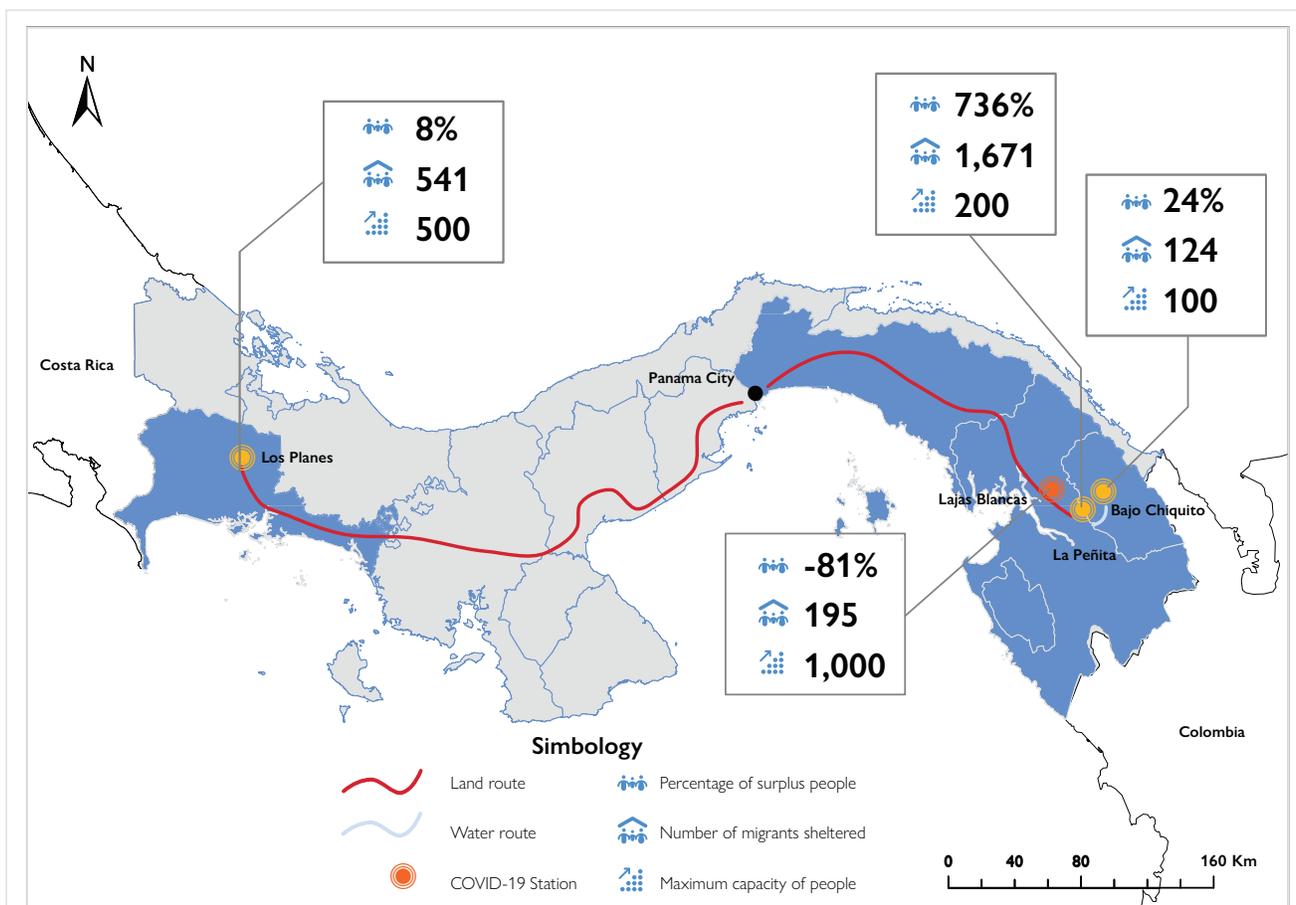
The Ombudsman's Office acted as a mediator between migrants, SENAFRONT and the National Migration Service (NMS), which reached several agreements, which include transferring migrants

to other MRSs, food improvements, a request submitted to the Costa Rica's General Directorate for Migration (DGME) to generate bilateral agreements for the continuity of the migration flow, and drawing up a list of potential applicants for voluntary returns to their countries of origin.

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-hotel/hospital protocol in Panama City. At the time of writing this report, 6 positive COVID-19 cases have been reported (6 currently in Panama City for being moderate cases), 175 recovered cases, and 14 remain at MRS Lajas Blancas because of possible contacts. A pair of twins and a baby were born, both from Haitian mothers.

At MRS Los Planes de Gualaca in Chiriquí, the health situation has not changed much, the three people with leishmaniasis continue under observation and medical treatment. Currently there is a crisis with family violence and states of anxiety that has upset a group of people, that are constantly complaining and protesting. Therefore, there was a request to increase the number of security staff. So far, zero cases of COVID-19 have been reported at MRS Los Planes.

SHELTERED POPULATION AT MIGRANT RECEIVING STATIONS



Basemap source: ESRI and UN World Map

This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

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

4 JUNE 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

 124
 Sheltered
 migrants

70%

 85
 Men and Women
 over 18 years of age

15%

 20
 Girls and
 adolescents under
 17 years of age

15%

 19
 Boys and adolescents
 under 17 years of age

<1%

 1
 Pregnant
 women

HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES

95%
 118



Haiti

3%
 4



Cuba

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

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT BAJO CHIQUITO, MAY-JUNE 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 informs that they are looking for land to build a hostel.

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 monitoring of migrants in Bajo Chiquito is being done through medical tours and staff from the Foris program of the Ministry of Health's (MINSA by its Spanish acronym).

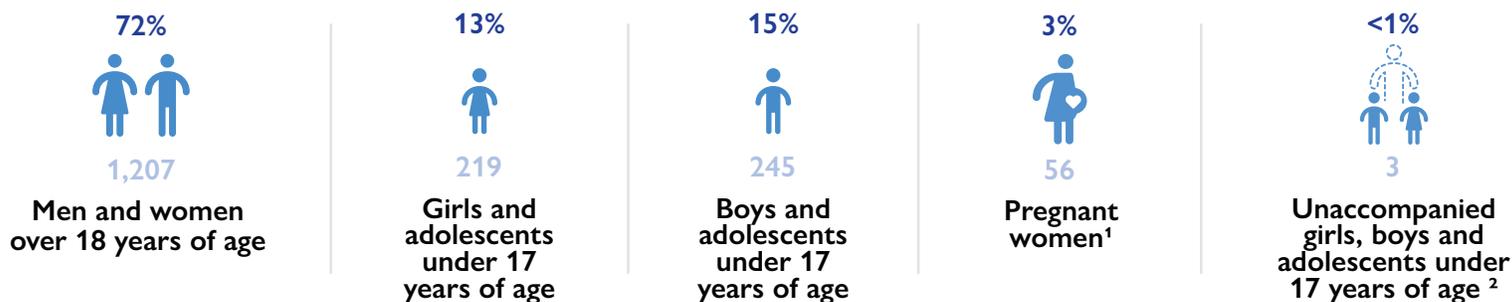
STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LA PEÑITA

4 JUNE 2020

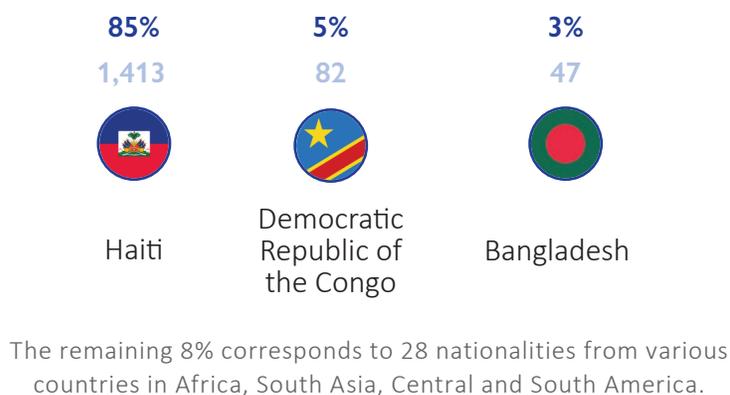
SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA



1,671
Sheltered migrants



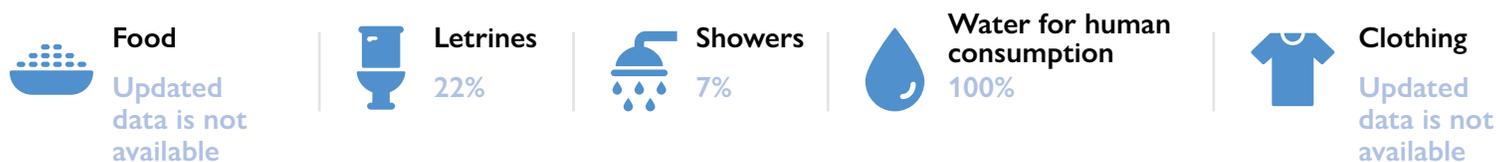
HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LA PEÑITA, MAY-JUNE 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.

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

² 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

- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership framework, four technicians are still presently monitoring the water, sanitation and hygiene distribution system.
- IOM, in coordination with the Norwegian Refugee Council, managed the donation of 400 hygiene kits.

- NMS pledged to provide 250 sleeping mats for migrants, following protests and complaints by the migrant population.

- IOM, in coordination with SENAFRONT, has monitored progress in the design of infrastructure and criteria to transfer the migrant population according to conditions of vulnerability to the new MRS San Vicente (formerly Nicanor).

- UNHCR donated 48 Refugee Housing Units to SENAFRONT, to be used as new facilities for the new MRS San Vicente (formerly Nicanor).

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

- NMS made a commitment to migrants housed at the MRS to deliver prepared or cooked food from the month of July onwards, after the protests and complaints by the migrant population itself.
- 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.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership, children at risk of malnutrition are being monitored.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains security staff providing safety and order in the community.

- Following the demonstrations and protests carried out by the migrants sheltered in MRS La Peñita, the Ombudsman's Office has continued to act as a mediator to resolve conflicts between the two parties. IOM has followed up with this entity on the agreements reached.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Implemented actions

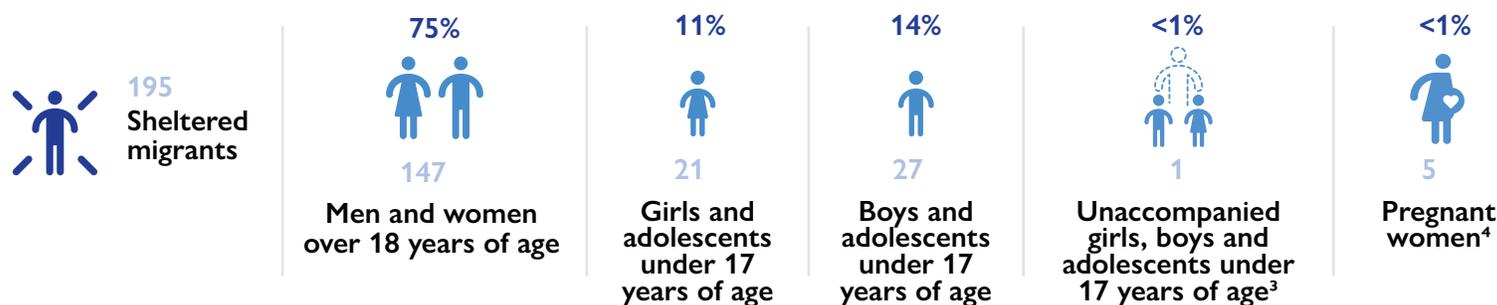
- NMS made a commitment to migrants to build a new shelter. It also agreed to transfer approximately 400 migrants to MRS Los Planes, in response to migrant protests, against the conditions in which they are living in MRS La Peñita.

- Migrants wishing to apply for international protection and refuge in Panama have been identified and, through UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council, their applications are being coordinated with the National Office for Refugee Affairs.

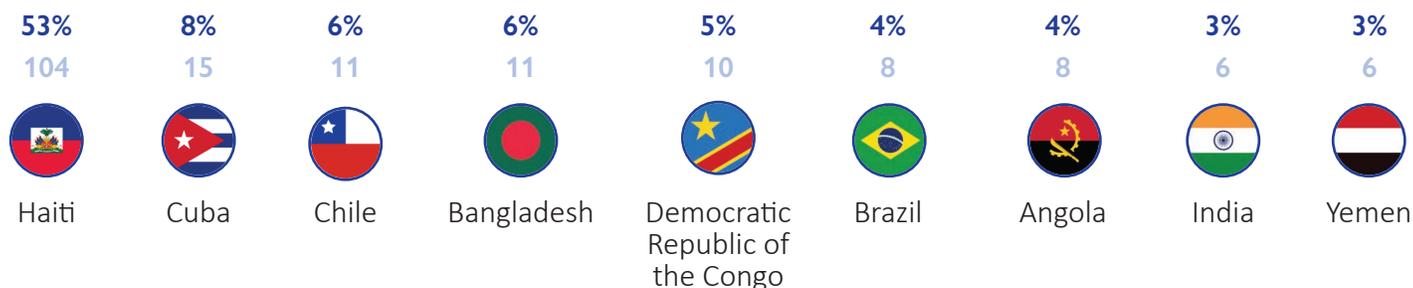
STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS

4 JUNE 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

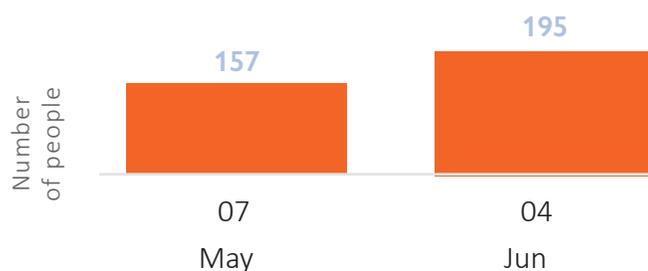


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



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

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS, MAY-JUNE 2020



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



³ Data included in children under 17 years of age.

⁴ Data included in women over 18 years of age.

COVID- 19 CASE STATISTICS

 **6**
Positives⁵

 **No updated data available**
Tests applied

 **14**
Suspected

 **175**
Recovered

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS

WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION (WASH)



Implemented actions

- 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.
- SENAFRONT continues delivering bottled water to migrants.

Identified needs

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

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT and NMS maintain a permanent presence in the MRS.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- MINSA maintains daily epidemiological monitoring of the population at the MRS.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT continues distributing food.

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

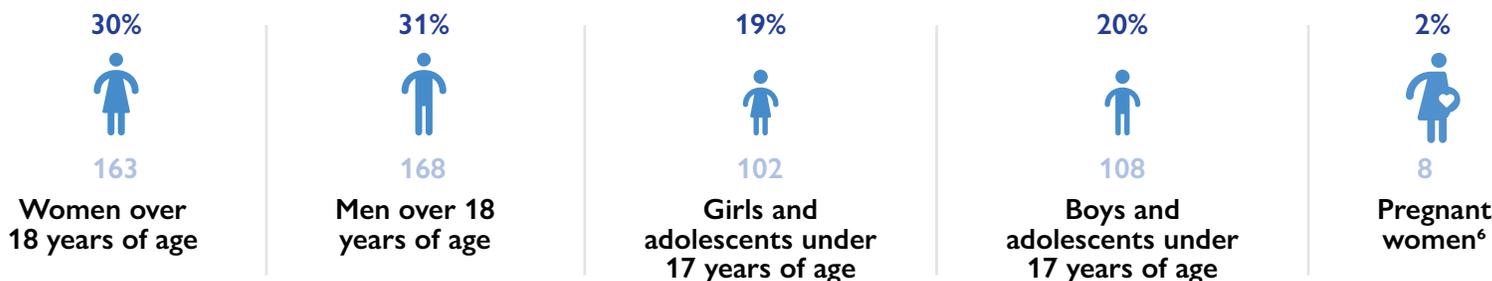
STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LOS PLANES

19 MAY, 2020

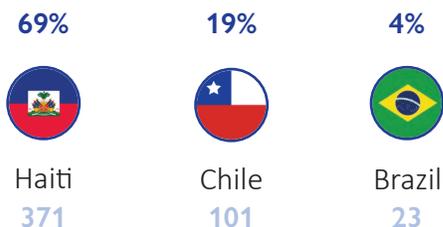
SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA



541
 Sheltered migrants

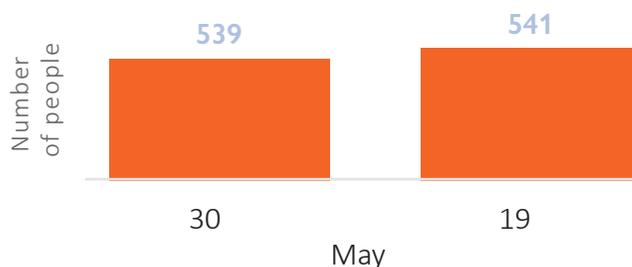


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



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

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LOS PLANES, MAY 2020



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

⁶ 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. The demolition of some huts for the expansion of the landfill is being assessed.

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.

Identified needs

- Migrants continue complaining about the food they are given.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Implemented actions

- Following a MINSA inspection to review the condition of the tanks and the water supply system, the NMS is standing by to take appropriate action.
- Migrants, NMS and SENAFRONT continue to make minor repairs to the infrastructure.
- Regarding the willingness to transfer migrants sheltered at MRS La Peñita to MRS Los Planes, NMS is preparing a site to install 15 tents, including 15 showers and 15 washing tubs.

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.
- There are now two people employed by NMS to assist with food preparation.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains 8 security units that are responsible for maintaining order and protecting the MRS perimeter.
- In response to violence cases, NMS has taken measures to reinforce security at the migration station. In addition, dialogue has been established with some of the people who present high levels of stress.
- IOM is in the process of finalising banners to disseminate messages on rules of coexistence and biosecurity protocols.

Identified needs

- There is an urgent need for permanent specialized services for psychosocial care of migrants, with special emphasis on children and gender-based violence.
- NMS identified the need for training on how to address the psychosocial care of migrants at the MRS.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- MINSA and NMS are monitoring people who have had leishmaniasis and a girl with cold symptoms and breathing difficulties. The girl was tested for COVID-19 and the results of the test are not available at the time of writing this report.

Identified needs

- Migrants have been identified with respiratory diseases, infections, lacerations and headaches.
- High levels of anxiety and stress have been identified, causing irritability in migrants.
- 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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