

HIGHLIGHTS



2,533

Migrants sheltered
at the MRS



170%

Overcapacity in
Migration Stations nationwide



66

Pregnant
women



30%

Children and
adolescents under 17



4

Unaccompanied children
and adolescents under 17



7

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



192

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 migrant stations across the province of Darién there are: 1,663 in MRS La Peñita, 118 in Bajo Chiquito, and 211 in MRS Lajas Blancas. There are also 3 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.

Due to the increase in cases at the provincial level, the authorities of Darién represented by the Governor of the Municipality of Pinogana in coordination with the Regional Director of the Ministry of Health (MINSA by its Spanish acronym), the Provincial Director of SINAPROC and the National Border Service (SENAFRONT by its Spanish acronym), under resolution number 003 of 9 June, 2020, decided to implement a sanitary fence at Agua Fría in order to control the entry and exit of people into the province of Darién. At the same time, another sanitary fence was established in the community of Yaviza to guarantee the safety of the population of the Emberá-Wounam region.

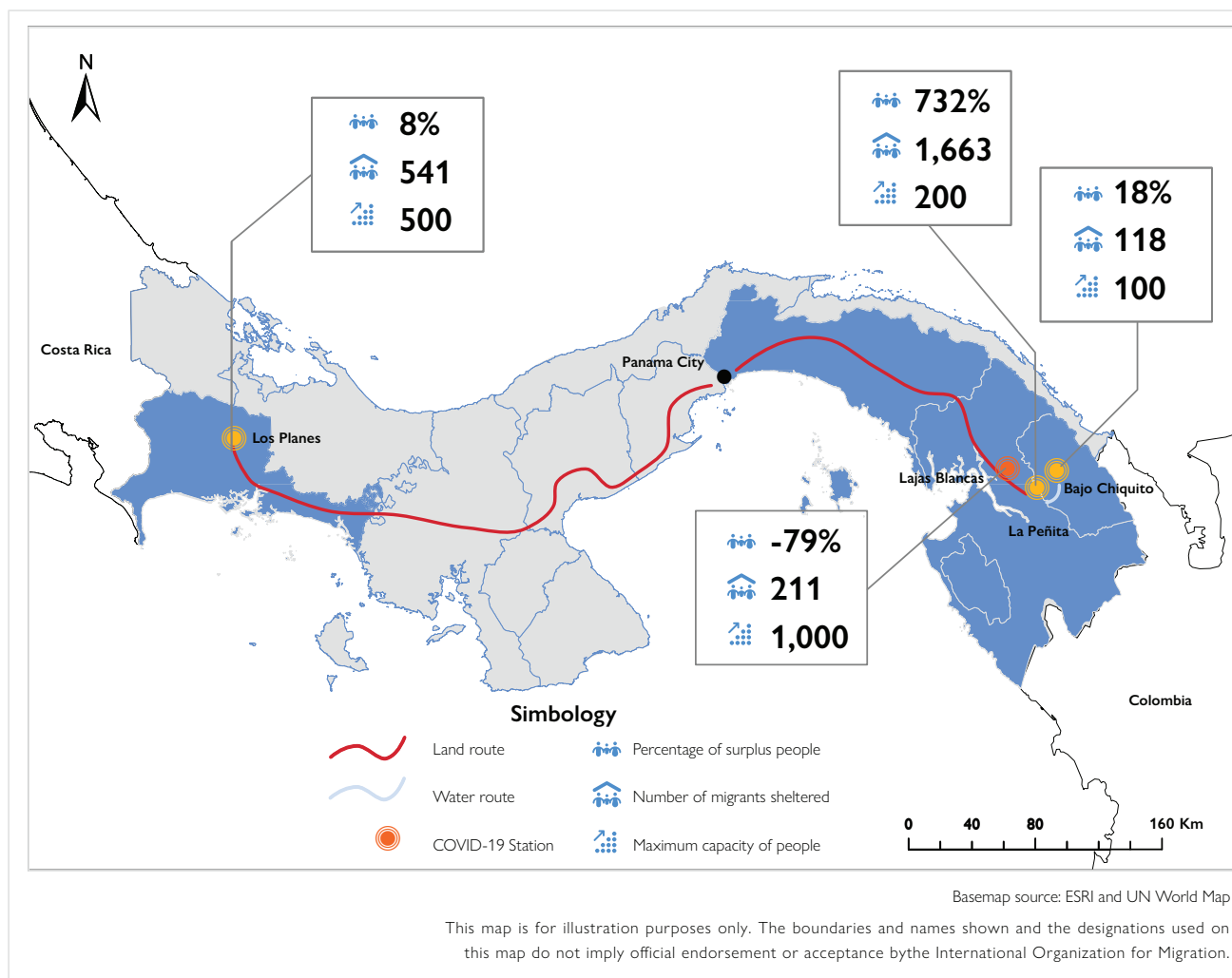
As of 11 June, Panama has 18,586 confirmed cases and a total of 418 deaths. In terms of border provinces, Darién reports a total of 429 cases, and Chiriquí a total of 573 positive cases.

Following the 3 June protest, on Friday, 5 June, the director of the National Migration Service (NMS), the Minister of Security and the

director of SENAFRONT visited the first phase of construction of the San Vicente MRS (known as Nicanor) to follow up on the work and installation of the infrastructure for the new migration station. Since the beginning of community transmission of COVID-19 in Darién, the number of cases in MRS La Peñita has decreased; 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, 7 positive COVID-19 cases have been reported (4 currently in Panama City for being moderate cases), 6 accumulated cases and 1 new case; 192 recovered cases, and 12 remain at MRS Lajas Blancas because of possible contacts.

At MRS Los Planes de Gualaca in Chiriquí, the health situation remains like the previous weeks. Adults and children with leishmaniasis continue under medical treatment, and this week a pregnant woman was transferred to the José Domingo de Obaldía Maternal and Child Hospital. Recreational activities with children and adults were resumed, such as soccer and volleyball games, donation of recreational equipment such as games and board games were distributed, and a film was shown as an integration activity. So far, zero cases of COVID-19 have been reported at MRS Los Planes.

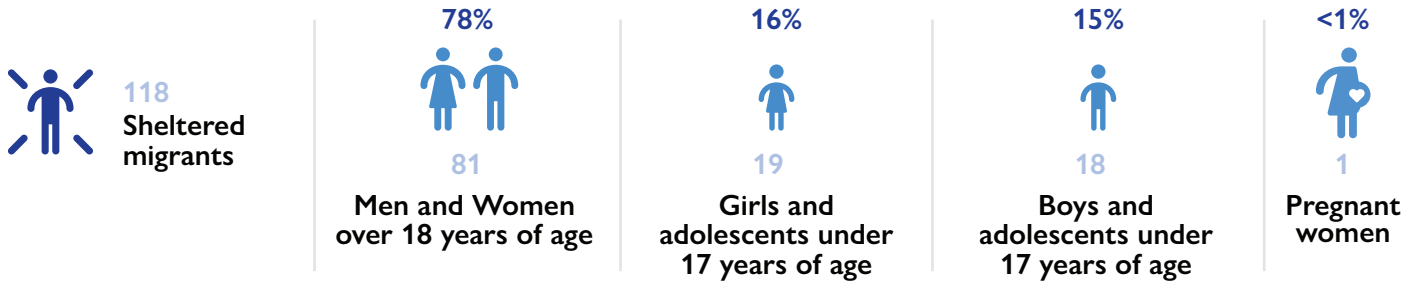
SHELTERED POPULATION AT MIGRANT RECEIVING STATIONS



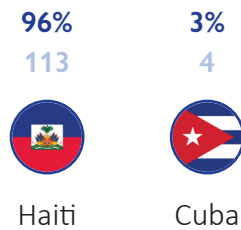
STATISTICS ON THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED IN THE COMMUNITY OF BAJO CHIQUITO

11 JUNE 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

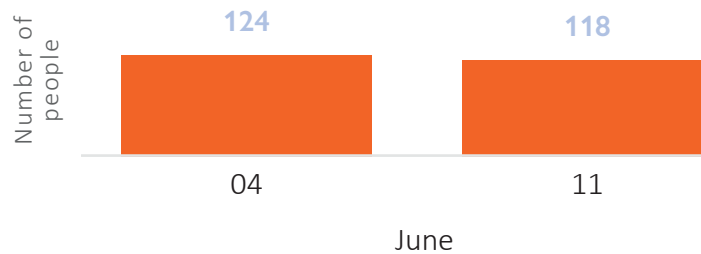


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



The remaining 1% corresponds to different nationalities from various countries in South America.

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT BAJO CHIQUITO, MAY-JUNE 2020



COVID- 19 CASE STATISTICS



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.

Identified needs

- Primary health care services are intermittent, that is, there are weeks when there is no paramedic present.
- Migrants have allergies and skin infections, as well as stomach diseases that cause diarrhea.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT continues to provide food for migrants.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT, in coordination with local authorities, continues to manage the acquisition of land for a hostel facility.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- Under the UNICEF-IFRC-Panamanian Red Cross partnership, information was collected on the medicines that are being required.
- UNFPA provided condoms for the migrant population.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains security staff that protects the community.
- Under the UNICEF-IFRC-Panamanian Red Cross partnership, two footballs were handed out to promote recreational activities among the migrant population.

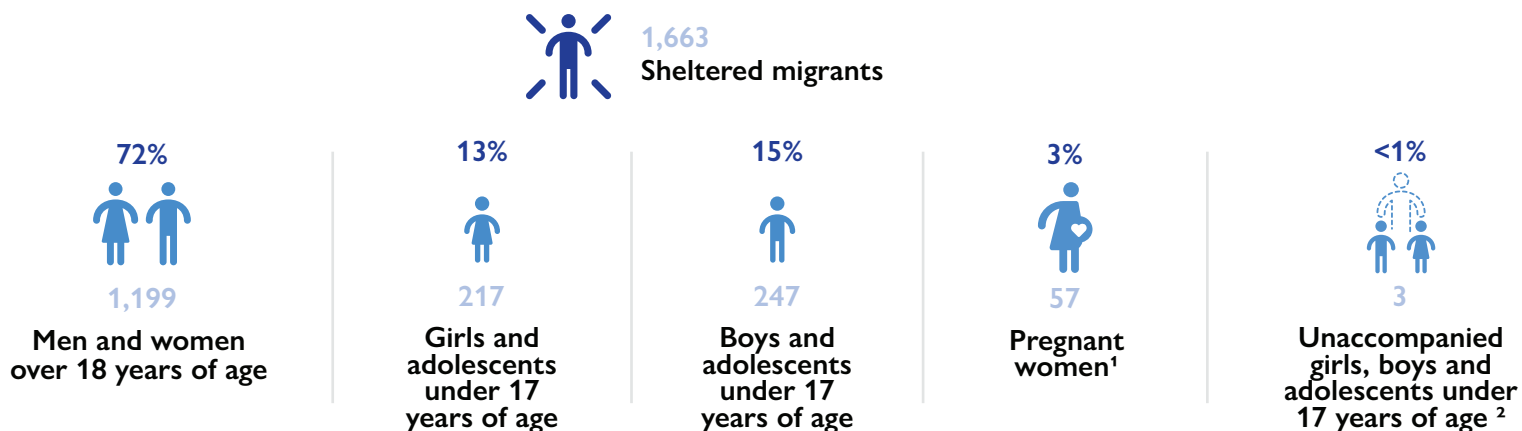
Identified needs

- Control and monitoring of pregnant women's health.

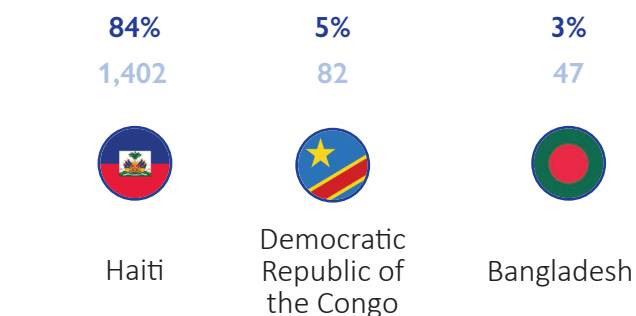
STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LA PEÑITA

11 JUNE 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

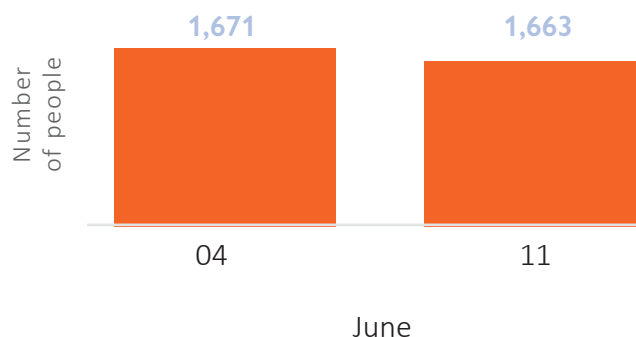


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES

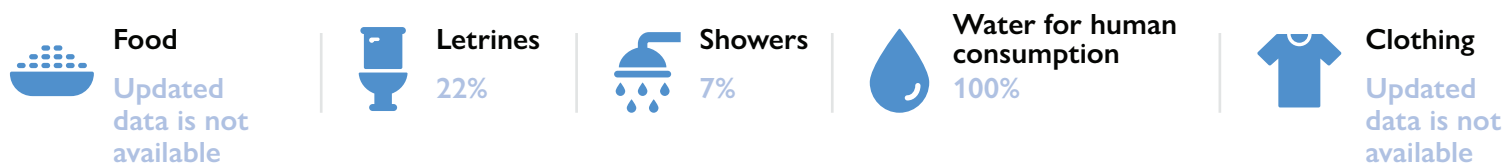


The remaining 8% corresponds to 28 nationalities from various countries in Africa, South Asia, Central and South America.

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LA PEÑITA, JUNE 2020



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



¹ Fifty-six are included in women over 18 years of age and 1 is included in women under 17 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.

Estadísticas de casos de COVID-19



1

Case 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.

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, as well as the distribution of 64,000 liters of drinking water daily.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

•The Apostolic Vicariate of Darién delivered 3,500 pounds of rice, 700 pounds of sugar, 350 one-liter bottles of oil, 2800 cans of sausage, 700 pounds of pasta, 1050 pounds of corn, 1,750 liters of milk, 700 pounds of lentils, 350 pounds of coffee, 1,400 cans of sardines, 1,400 juices, 700 pounds of flour and 350 pounds of salt for the use of the migrant population. SENAFRONT will be in charge of distributing the food to the migrants.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Implemented actions

•IOM and the Ombudsman's Office, with the support of UNHCR, made a joint visit to monitor the progress of the construction of the new MRS San Vicente in Nicanor. SENAFRONT is working on flattening the land.

•UNHCR developed a virtual training for SENAFRONT officials on setting up and assembling refugee housing units. This was followed by testing a successful setup.

•IOM donated office equipment such as automatic power regulators, LCD screens, multifunctional printers and computers to SENAFRONT.

•UNICEF delivered 100 tarpaulins and 500 sleeping mats.

•SENAFRONT has refugee tents and housing units donated by different entities, but these have not been distributed or made available to the migrant population.

Identified needs

•Donated tents and mats have deteriorated due to heavy rains and flooding during the current rainy season.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- IOM and PAHO are developing a proposal for the psychosocial care of migrants at the MRS.
- MINSA, in coordination with IOM, has agreed to improve health care at the station.
- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership, a physician available to accompany pregnant women, as well as a nurse for nutritional screening, and a health technician.
- UNFPA provided condoms for the migrant population.

Identified needs

- Four cases of child malnutrition have been identified, one of which is still in hospital.
- Patients with severe diarrhea, lesions and skin infections from mosquito bites have been reported.
- The sheltered population is strongly affected at the psychosocial level, mainly due to uncertainty and a prolonged and indefinite stay at the MRS.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains security staff providing safety and order in the community.
- An inter-agency meeting was held with the participation of UNICEF, IOM, in addition to the Ombudsman's Office, the Norwegian Refugee Council (with the support of UNHCR) and the Apostolic Vicariate of Darién. Agreements were made regarding a communication campaign, monitoring of protection needs, activities and donations.

•IOM in conjunction with the Ombudsman's Office are monitoring compliance with the agreements made after the protests of 3 June.

•IOM provided SENAFRONT eight 2 x 8-meter banners and 16 posters with information on hygiene measures and prevention of COVID-19 aimed at migrants in various languages such as French, English, Spanish, Arabic and Haitian Creole.

•The Ombudsman's Office, in coordination with UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council, has followed up on asylum-seekers' cases and referred them to the National Office for Refugee Affairs.

•UNICEF and UNHCR are accompanying 15 children who were born in Panamanian territory, through follow-up and coordination with the authorities of the Civil Registry (Electoral Tribunal) to avoid risks of statelessness. At the time of writing this report, eight children with Panamanian nationality have been registered.

•The Ombudsman's Office has set up a complaints and suggestions box in the MRS for the use and disposal of migrants.

Identified needs

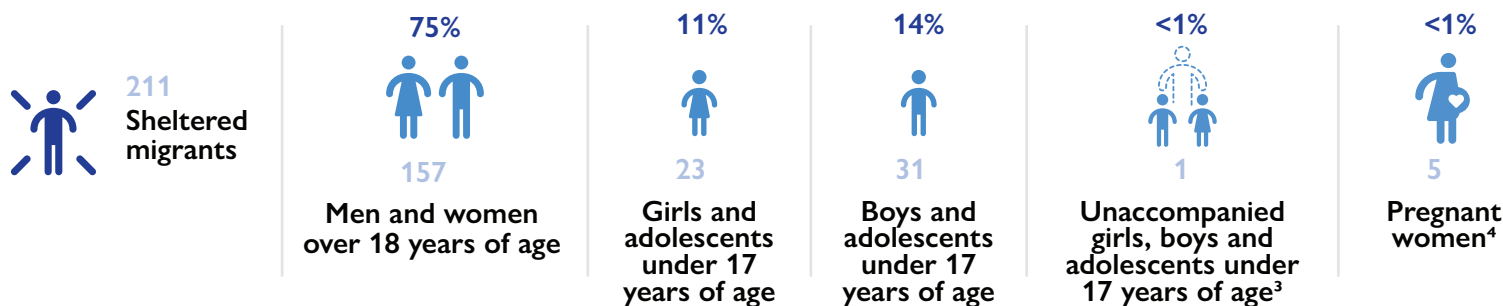
•It has been reported that there has been an increase in cases of gender-based violence, violence against children and between people of different nationalities.

•Migrants who have been in the MRS for 90 to 120 days have expressed their desire to be transferred to places or shelters run by the Catholic Church.

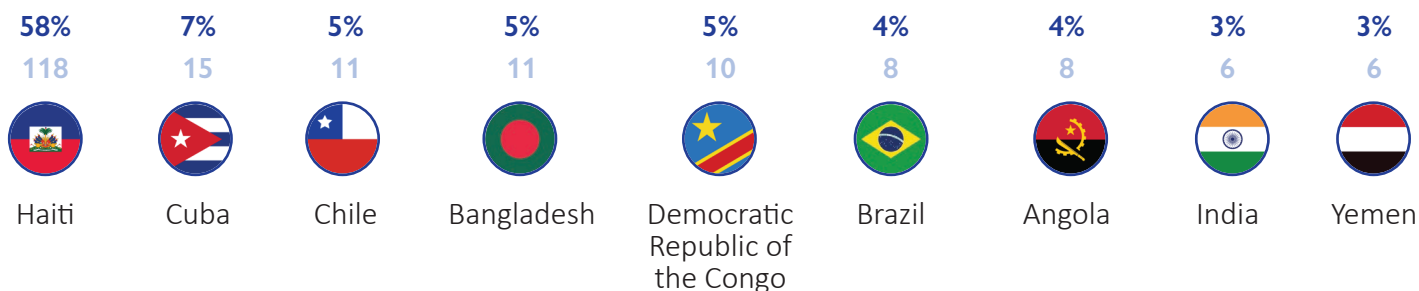
STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS

11 JUNE, 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

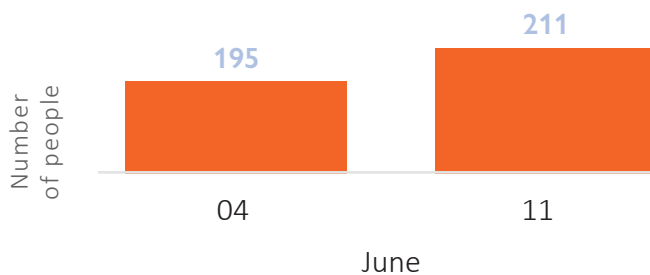


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES

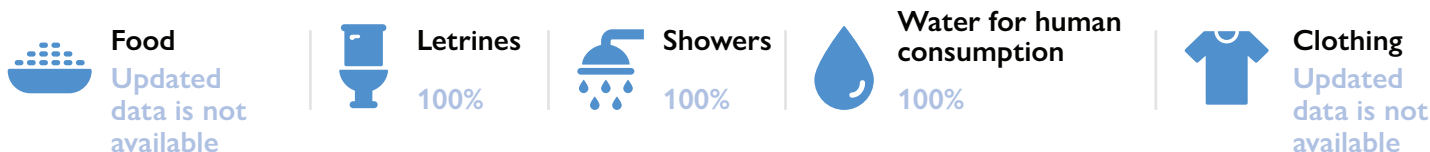


The remaining 6% correspond to nationalities from various countries in South America, South Asia and Africa.

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS, 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



HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS

WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION (WASH)



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains the distribution of 2-litre water bottles every 2 days for migrants.

Identified needs

- Drinking water is not available for consumption by migrants.
- Water is unavailable in showers, latrines and hand washing basins.
- Improvement is required to meet the humanitarian standard of 15 litres of water for human consumption per person per day.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Implemented actions

- IOM managed 25 sleeping mats that will be donated to NMS.

PROTECTION



Identified needs

- Latrines are not separated by gender.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains the distribution of three prepared meals for migrants.

Identified needs

- Migrants report that the food portions are very small.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

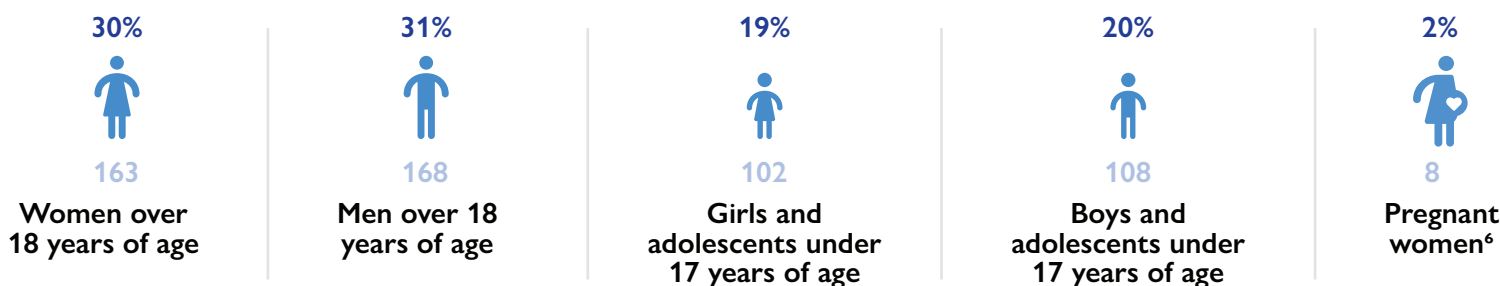
- MINSA maintains daily MRS epidemiological monitoring.
- UNFPA provided condoms for the migrant population.

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

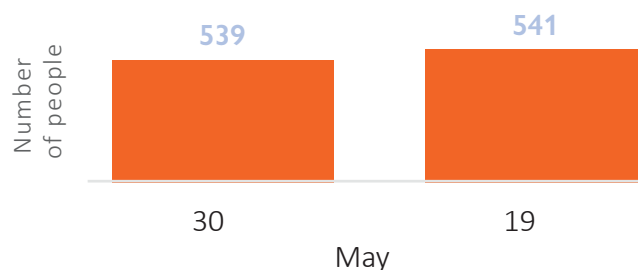


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



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



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

- NMS has emphasized the promotion of hygiene to specific groups of migrants through awareness talks and one-to-one talks.

Identified needs

- Currently in the middle of the rainy season and with recent heavy rains, plus a collapsed landfill, sewage runoff was found heading to the creek next to the MRS.
- Cleaning frequency of latrines must be increased.
- Install hand-washing stations; provided with 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.

- NMS maintains the distribution of bottled water to children and pregnant women, as well as cans of milk for children between 0-8 years of age.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Implemented actions

- NMS has installed mobile latrines to complement the existing ones. They are serviced three times a week.
- Migrants, help out voluntarily with cleaning activities, minor infrastructure repairs and distribution of clothing.
- SINAPROC and the Fire Department provided general recommendations on risk management and emergency prevention. However, it is critical to establish a strategic plan.

Identified needs

- Specialized technical support is required to repair the MRS infrastructure, specifically the electrical installation.
- There are no gender or age specific bathrooms.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

- NMS continues to provide three meals to the entire migrant population. The food portions distributed have been improved.
- A group of migrant women have organized themselves to prepare snacks for children between 0-5 years of age.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains 8 to 10 officers that are responsible for maintaining order and protecting the MRS perimeter.

Identified needs

- There is an urgent need for permanent specialized psychosocial care services for migrants, with special emphasis on children and gender-based violence, as well as the development of preferred routes and permanent psychosocial support programs.
- NMS identifies the need for training on how to address the psychosocial care of migrants in the MRS.
- The implementation of an educational programme for school-aged children is necessary, as a large number of children in this age group have been identified, as well as safe spaces for children and adolescents to guarantee their right to development.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- MINSA and NMS have set up a migrant health centre at the MRS, which is staffed by a physician and nurses. Approximately 30 patients are seen daily, and referrals are made to hospitals for special cases.

Identified needs

- Migrants have been identified with respiratory diseases, infections, injuries and headaches.
- High levels of anxiety and stress have been identified, irritating 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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