

HIGHLIGHTS



2,520

Migrants sheltered
at the MRS



172%

Overcapacity in
Migration Stations nationwide



67
Pregnant
women



30%

Children and
adolescents under 17



<1%

Unaccompanied children
and adolescents under 17



No updated data available

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



22

Recovered cases of COVID-19



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



Transit population is not ruled out
through the Darién National Park

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 2,520 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, 106 in Bajo Chiquito, and 35 in MRS Lajas Blancas. Furthermore, there are 705 migrants in the province of Chiriquí at MRS Los Planes. Borders continue to be closed until 23 July.

On June 25, IOM held a high-level meeting with the Director of the National Migration Service (NMS) to review various issues related to the situation of the MRS and their infrastructure improvements. The projects planned to improve the areas where migrants are located on both borders and the services they currently provide, as well as areas of cooperation between the institution and the organization.

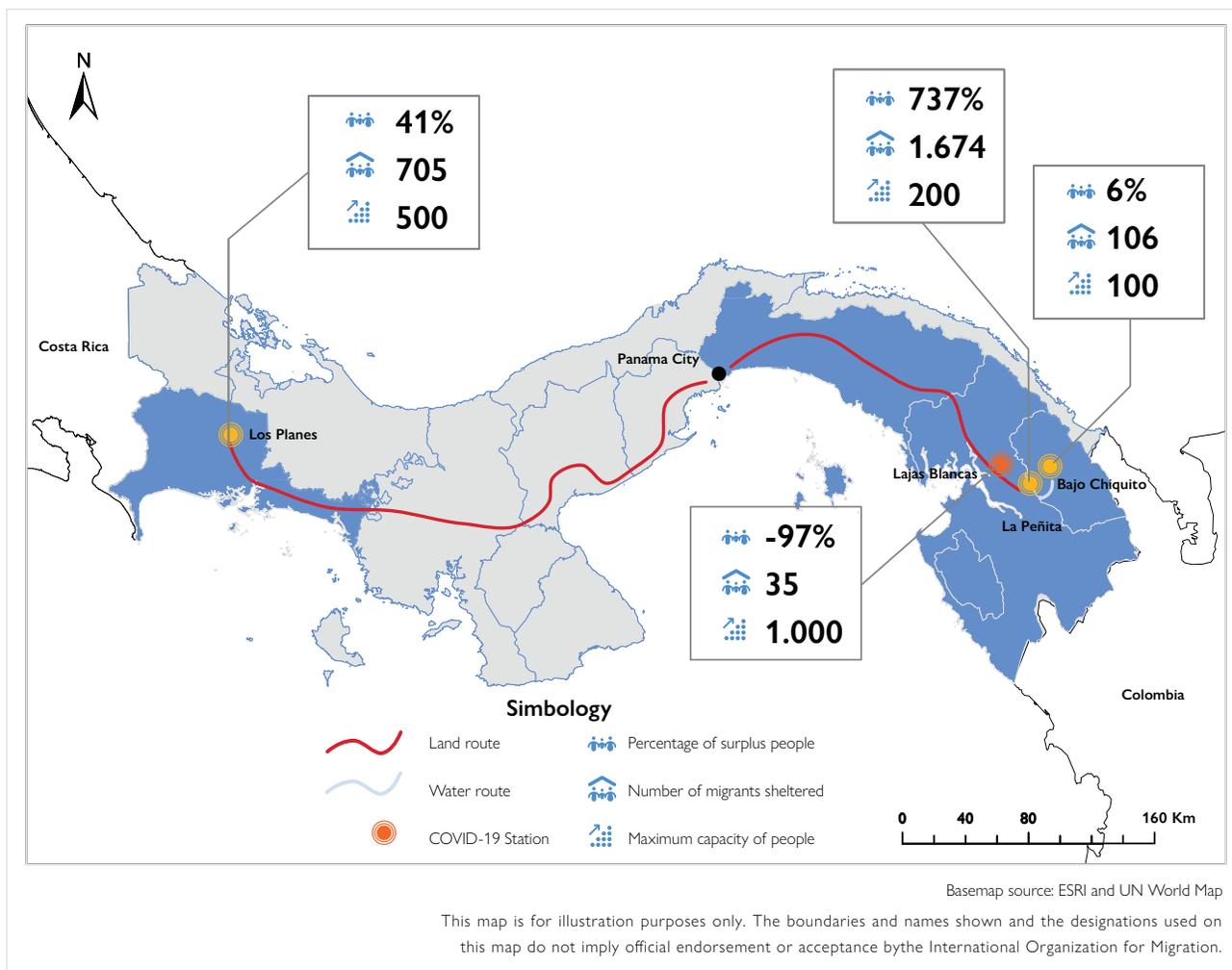
During the period from this report, 168 migrants were transferred to MRS Los Planes from MRS Lajas Blancas. This transfer complies with quarantine protocols for suspected cases, and with the recovery process of positive COVID-19 cases. This transfer was made possible through the inter-institutional coordination between the National Border Service (SENAFRONT by its Spanish acronym) and the National Migration Service (NMS) under protocols established by the Ministry of Health (MINSA by its Spanish acronym).

As of June 25, Panama has registered 29,037 confirmed cases, of which 13,673 are active cases; and a total death count of 564. In terms of border provinces, Darién reports a total of 986 cases, and Chiriquí a total of 849 positive cases.

Since the beginning of community transmission of COVID-19 in Darién, 3 positive cases have been recorded in the community of Lajas Blancas and 60 positive cases in MRS La Peñita. 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, 3 positive COVID-19 cases (5 currently in Panama for being moderate) have been confirmed, and 60 migrants among suspects and positive COVID-19 cases in La Peñita, 22 recovered and 9 possible contacts in MRS Lajas Blancas. So far, 95 swabs have been taken. This week there were 2 births in the Yaviza Maternal and Infant Center, which at the time of the report remain stable.

In MRS Los Planes de Gualaca in Chiriquí, the health situation has not changed that much. Two people continue to require specialized health care, and they declare that they do not have the economic resources to access medical services. The adults and the child with leishmaniasis continue under medical treatment. On Wednesday, a child with a fever was evacuated and hospitalized. At the time of writing, studies are underway to determine his medical diagnosis.

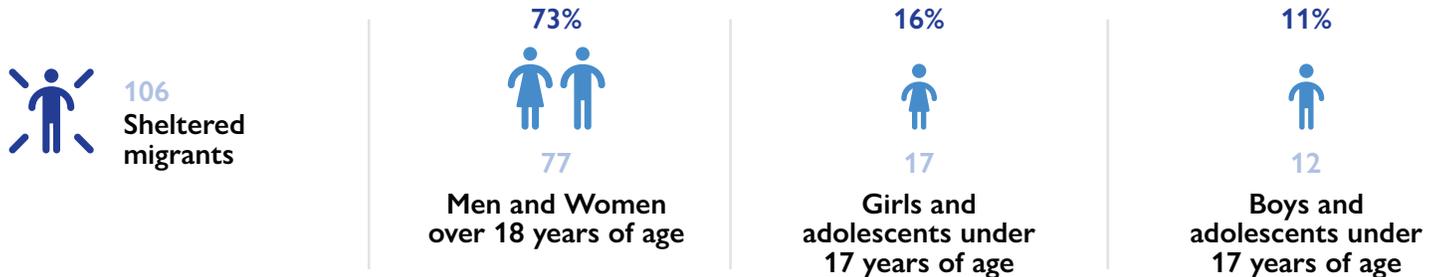
SHELTERED POPULATION AT MIGRANT RECEIVING STATIONS



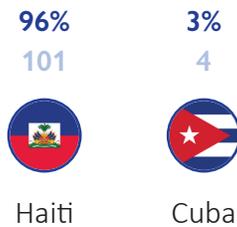
STATISTICS ON THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED IN THE COMMUNITY OF BAJO CHIQUITO

25 JUNE, 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

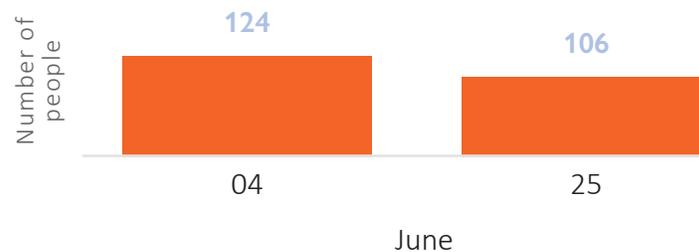


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



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

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT BAJO CHIQUITO, JUNE 2020



COVID-19 CASE STATISTICS



No updated data available

Cases spread by
community transmission
at Bajo Chiquito community

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

•Progress is required with the construction of showers and latrines at the MRS.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Identified needs

•Although migrants are housed in shelters, they are in temporary shelters made of tarpaulins or tents. Migrants do not have decent conditions in which to rest, for example, they do not have sleeping mats.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

•SENAFRONT continues to provide food for migrants every ten days.
•Food portions have been improved, but differentiated feeding for pregnant women has not been improved.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

•SENAFRONT maintains security staff that protects the community.

Identified needs

•Cases of migrants in need of international protection have been identified.
•There have been violent incidents among migrants.

HEALTH



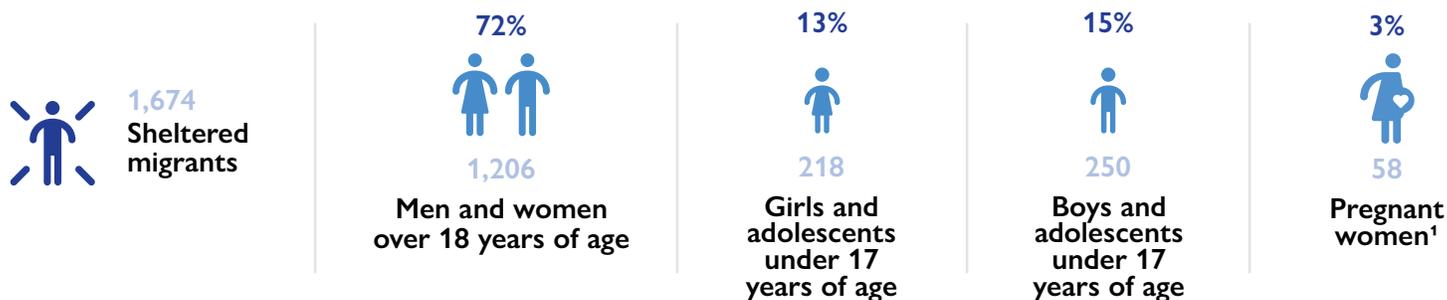
Identified needs

•Migrants, especially children, have allergies and skin infections from mosquito bites, as well as stomach diseases that cause diarrhea.
•The medical post has no medicines or medical supplies for personal protection or medical care.

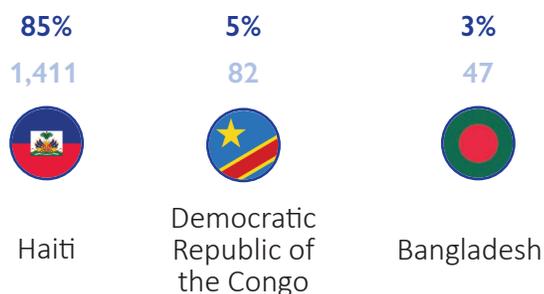
STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LA PEÑITA

25 JUNE, 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

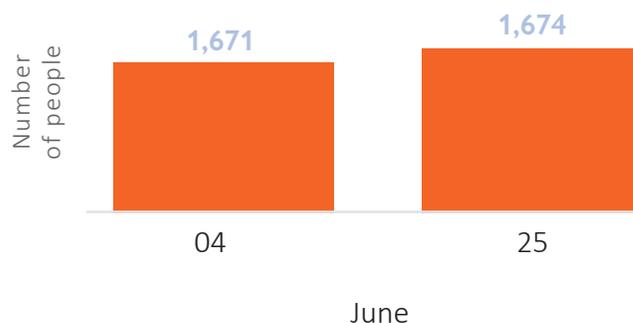


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



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-seven 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.

COVID- 19 CASE STATISTICS



No updated data available

Cases spread by
community transmission
at Bajo Chiquito community

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 systems, as well as the distribution of 50,000 liters of drinking water daily.
- UNICEF-IFRC also delivered hygiene kits to the local population of La Peñita and has promoted a committee made up of migrants to toilet cleaning chores.

Identified needs

- The cleaning company services the latrines twice a week, which is insufficient.

- SENAFRONT has increased the amount of food provided to migrants and, therefore, the migrant population reports that this has improved their quality of life during the week.

Identified needs

- Sustainability in the amount of food provided to migrants is required to maintain humanitarian food standards.
- There is no differentiated feeding for pregnant women or children under 5 years of age.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

- IOM maintains monitoring and follow-up meetings for the management of food donations by the National Secretariat for the Development of Afro-Panamanians and the Apostolic Vicariate of Darién.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Implemented actions

- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership framework, 100 4x5-metre tarpaulins were donated to SENAFRONT to be used by migrant families, and to build temporary accommodations, which allows protection from sun and rain.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership framework, a physician is available to focus on accompanying pregnant women, a nurse for nutritional screening and a health technician.
- SENAFRONT has transferred three migrants to different hospitals in Panama City for specialized treatment (a woman giving birth to twins, a person with kidney failure and a child with first- and second-degree burns).
- MINSa maintains medical staff during the morning hours, throughout the week.

Identified needs

- Four cases of child malnutrition have been identified, one of which is still hospitalized.
- Patients with severe diarrhea, injury and skin infections from mosquito bites are reported.
- The sheltered population is strongly affected at the psychosocial level, mainly due to uncertainty and their prolonged and indefinite stay at the MRS.
- There is a list of 60 people waiting to be transferred to MRS Lajas Blancas as part of the protocol for dealing with COVID-19 positive cases and their contacts.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains security staff providing safety and order in the community.
- UNICEF has followed up on the cases of unaccompanied adolescents located at the MRS in conjunction with National Secretariat for Children, Adolescents and the Family (SENNIAF by its Spanish acronym) and the Family Court in Metetí. One of the adolescents turned 18 during his stay in Panama.

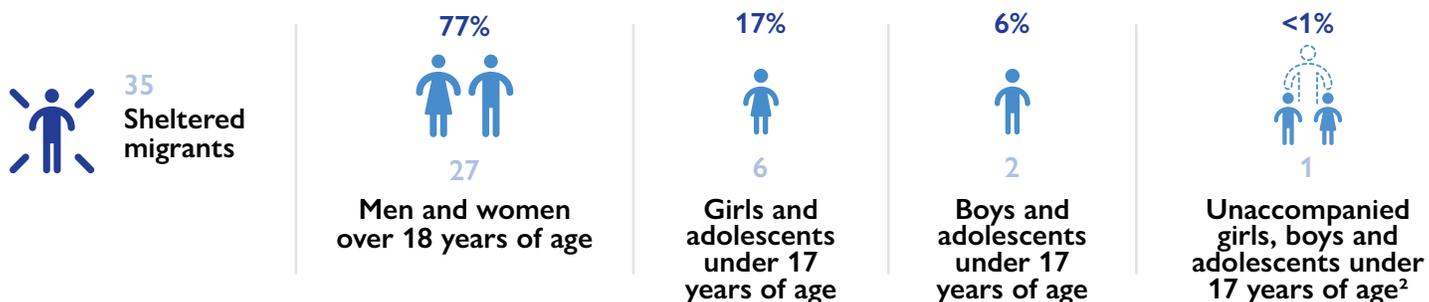
Identified needs

- An increase in cases of gender-based violence, violence against children and between people of different nationalities has been reported.
- Doctors stationed at the medical post receive threats from migrants.
- There is a need on the ground for agencies and institutions focused on the protection of migrants.
- More communication activities are needed regarding migration status and mobility restrictions in Panama and throughout the Central American region.
- Information should be disseminated about the applicable protocols for migrants who need to be hospitalized and those who need to be legally processed.
- A constant presence is required from entities at the MRS that provide refugee application information in Panama.
- Progress is needed in establishing protection measures for unaccompanied adolescents.

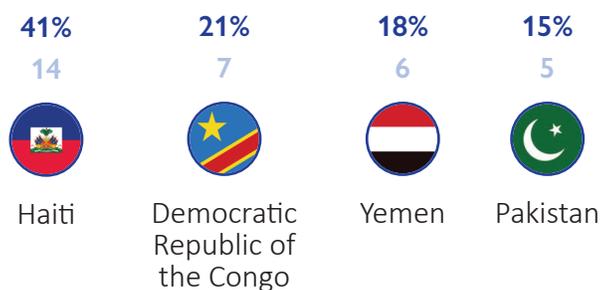
STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS

25 JUNE, 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

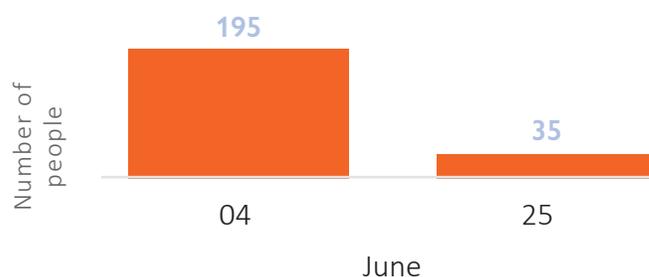


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



The remaining 5% correspond to nationalities from various countries in South and Central America.

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



COVID-19 CASE STATISTICS



² Data included in children under 17 years of age.

³ Eight positive moderate cases have been transferred to hotels/hospitals in Panama City.

RESPUESTA HUMANITARIA EN LA ERM LAJAS BLANCAS

WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION (WASH)



Implemented actions

- The National Water and Sewer Institute provides 9,000 gallons of water every 3 days at the MRS.
- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership framework, the water distribution system was reorganized.

Identified needs

- The National Civil Protection System's water treatment plants are damaged and need to be repaired as soon as possible.

Identified needs

- Currently, COVID-19 positive migrants and their contacts are at the MRS.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Identified needs

- SENAFRONT, in coordination with the NMS, transferred 168 migrants from MRS Lajas Blancas to MRS Los Planes. The transfer was logistically carried out with 6 buses (4 private transport buses paid by the NMS, 1 public transport bus, and 1 bus owned by the NMS).

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

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

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- IOM, in coordination with the Ombudsman's Office, followed up to verify the conditions of the transfer and protection of migrants from MRS Lajas Blancas to MRS Los Planes.
- UNICEF made a request to not mobilize newborn children without documentation in order to avoid the risk of statelessness, as well as the unaccompanied adolescent located in this MRS, until the protection measure is determined.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT transferred a pregnant COVID-19 positive woman to the Mother and Child Center in Metetí, to be treated in the specialized room at this medical center.

Identified needs

- Latrines are not separated by gender.
- Migrants who were not included in the transfer to MRS of Planes de Gualaca expressed their disagreement, since they have been stuck in Panama for over six months.

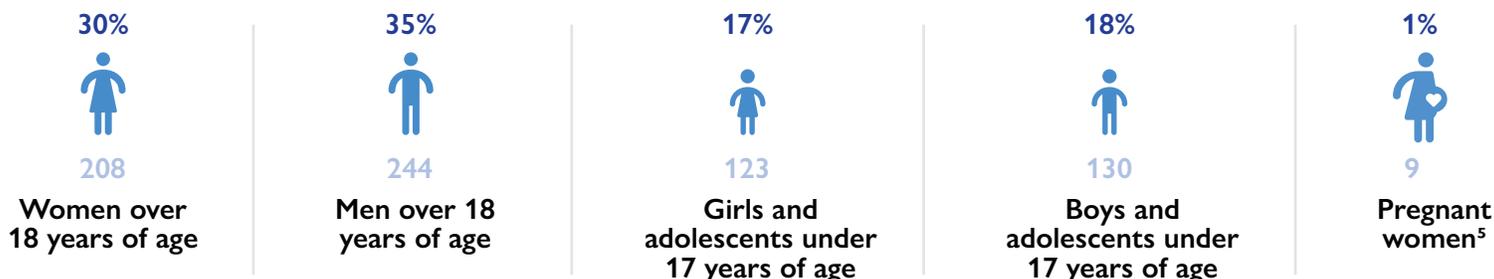
STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LOS PLANES⁴

25 JUNE, 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA



705
Sheltered migrants



HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES

25 MAY, 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

n = 541

69%

371



Haiti

19%

101



Chile

4%

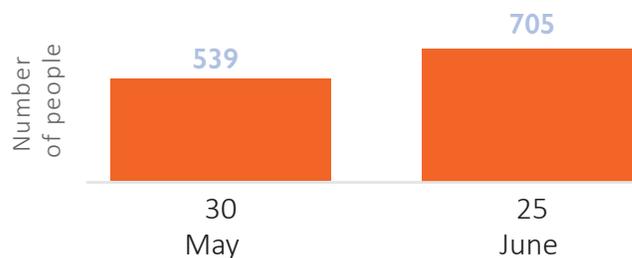
23



Brasil

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-JUNE 2020



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



Food

Updated data is not available



Letrines

Updated data is not available



Showers

5%



Water for human consumption

100%



Clothing

Updated data is not available

⁴ The Government of Panama does not have updated statistics, so the figures are preliminary and may be subject to change. No updated data is available on nationality, pregnant women and unaccompanied migrant children.

⁵ Data included in women over 18 years of age. Data from 25 May 2020.

COVID-19 CASE STATISTICS



0

No cases of COVID19 have been identified in the migration flow

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN MRS LOS PLANES

WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION (WASH)



Implemented actions

- NMS maintains promoting hygiene among specific groups of migrants through awareness talks and on a one-to-one basis.

Identified needs

- Currently in the middle of the rainy season and with recent heavy rains, water for human consumption shows sediment and therefore migrants are unwilling to drink it.
- 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 requires support regarding the distribution of canned milk for children from 0 to 8 years old, with priority given to urgent cases that require special formulas.

- There is a need for food supplies in general and specifically fruits, vegetables, formulas for children and infants.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Implemented actions

- IOM coordinated the participation of officials and representatives from NMS, MINSA, SENAFRONT and SENNIAF in virtual seminars on Camp Management and Coordination.
- SENAFRONT, in coordination with NMS, transferred 165 migrants from MRS Lajas Blancas to MRS Los Planes. The transfer took place under MINSA health protocols.

Identified needs

- Specialized technical support is required to repair the MRS infrastructure, mainly the electrical installation.
- Seventy-five percent of the latrines require repairs.
- The presence of mosquitoes and snakes around the cabins has been identified, so additional pest spraying is required.
- The solid waste dump has collapsed, and gray and black water is polluting a creek adjacent to the MRS.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

- NMS continues to provide three daily meals to the entire migrant population.

Identified needs

- NMS maintains the distribution of bottled water to children and pregnant women. However, there are shortages at the moment and bottled water is only being delivered three times a week.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

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

Identified needs

- There is no gender- or age-specific bathrooms.
- 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 identified the need for training on how to address the psychosocial care of migrants at the MRS.
- Mechanisms need to be established addressing mental health of the migrant population, given the increase in anxiety and stress, led by MINSA.
- A voluntary departure of a group of migrants from the MRS was reported, who remain at the Paso Canoas border because Costa Rica denied entry as part of its border closure policy.
- Humanitarian mediation is required to assist these people.
- NMS does not have enough staff at the MRS to perform a census of migrants, and therefore require assistance.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

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

Identified needs

- Two cases requiring specialized medical care have been identified: one person with a stomach abscess and another person in need of a tooth extraction (maxillofacial). These people have recurrent pain.
- A shortage of medication has been identified at the MRS clinic; however, doctors have issued prescriptions to be used at pharmacies, but migrants do not have the economic resources to pay for them.
- Migrants have been identified with respiratory diseases, infections, lacerations and headaches. This number may increase with the arrival of migrants from Darién.
- 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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This publication was made possible through the support of the United States Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), under the framework of the Regional Programme on Migration, Mesoamerica-Caribbean. However, the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the United States Government.



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