


HIGHLIGHTS


 **2.474**
Migrants sheltered
at the MRS

 **150%**
Overcapacity in
Migration Stations nationwide

 **65**
Pregnant
women

 **31%**
Children and
adolescents under 17

 **<1%**
Unaccompanied children
and adolescents under 17

 **9**
Cases of COVID-19 have been identified
by community transmission in Darién

 **220**
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 March 12, Panama has been in a state of emergency, with closed borders, as a result of the measures taken to contain the virus. Due to the closing of the Costa Rican borders on 16 March, Operation Controlled Flow has been severely affected. At present, there are 2,474 migrants stranded in the national territory, distributed as follows:

In the stations of the Province of Darién there are 1,510 migrants at MRS La Peñita, 94 in MRS Bajo Chiquito, and 220 in MRS Lajas Blancas. In the province of Chiriquí, in the MRS Los Planes, there

are currently 650 migrants. The closure of the border areas continues to be postponed until 23 July.

In the fight against COVID-19, the authorities of the Ministry of Health (MINSa by its Spanish acronym) presented a new guide for treatment of the virus at the first level of care.

As of July 23, Panama has 56,817 confirmed cases, of which 23,780 are active cases; and a total death count of 1,209. In terms of border provinces, Darién reports a total of 1,210 cases, and Chiriquí a total of 3,024 positive cases.

After detecting COVID-19 positive cases at MRS Los Planes, isolation was complicated due to the lack of adequate spaces and communication issues. The affected migrants are not isolated, they share spaces without abiding safe distancing measures or queue to get their food without following bio-security recommendations. An appeal is made to international organizations to intervene, since MINSa left the migration station.

In a joint effort between the Apostolic Vicariate of Darién, the National Secretariat for the Development of Afro-Panamanians, the National Border Service (SENAFRONT by its Spanish acronym) and IOM, two food roads were moved in the province of Darién, one for the migrant population and the other for the Panamanian population.

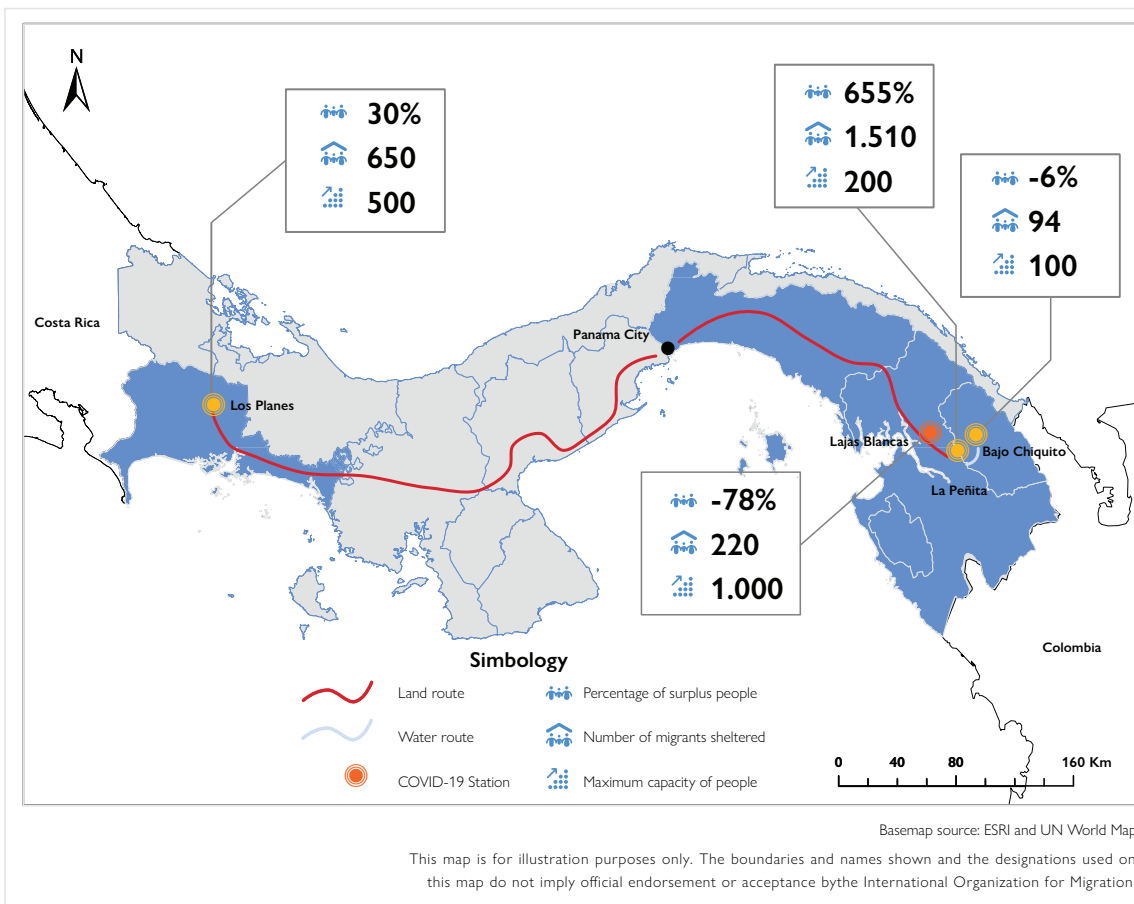
Since the beginning of the community transmission of COVID-19 in Darién, 9 positive cases have been recorded in MRS Lajas Blancas and there are no updated data from the MRS La Peñita. At the time of

writing this report, 220 recovered cases are reported in the MRS Lajas Blancas. UNICEF reports that there are 29 newborns, of which 20 have been registered with the Electoral Tribunal, with nine pending.

In the MRS Los Planes de Gualaca in Chiriquí, the same number of COVID-19 positive cases is maintained, these being 8 migrants, three National Migration Service (NMS) officials and one SENAFRONT official. So far, these people have not received medications; only the officials who are isolated in one of the cabins because they purchase the medications. However, migrants do not have the monetary resources to do so. A minor who was stung by a scorpion was evacuated, so it is necessary to fumigate the area. Sixteen COVID-19 tests have been conducted. Attention at the Health Center located in the community of Gualaca has been suspended.

The President of Panama decided to decree Friday July 17, as a day of national reflection, through Executive Decree 295, since Panama reached the unfortunate number of 1,000 deaths from COVID-19. In addition, MINSa presented the new treatment guide for COVID-19 at the first level of care. On Monday, July 20, the school year began at the official campuses. However, not all children have Internet access, and this has caused an exodus from the farms to the communities in the province of Darién in order to seek Internet access. This dynamic is reversed in the community of La Peñita, where more and more families are abandoning their homes due to the constant threats and levels of violence from the migrant population towards the inhabitants of the La Peñita community.

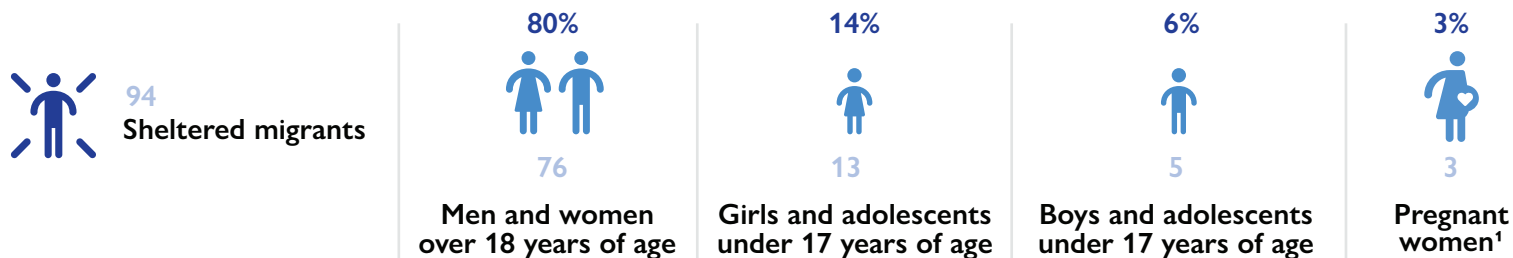
SHELTERED POPULATION AT MIGRANT RECEIVING STATIONS



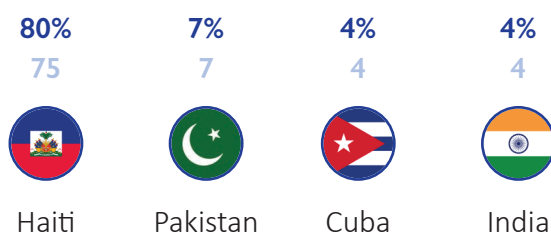
STATISTICS ON THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED IN THE COMMUNITY OF BAJO CHIQUITO

23 JULY, 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

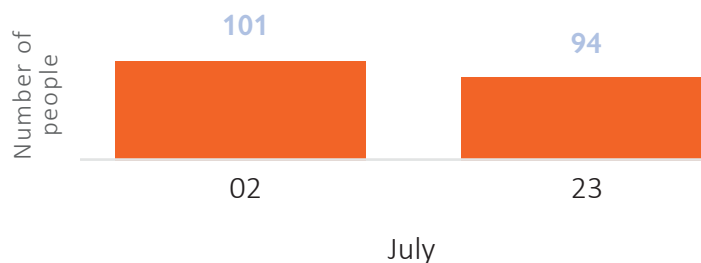


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



The remaining 5% corresponds to different nationalities from various countries in South America and Asia.

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT BAJO CHIQUITO, JULY 2020



COVID- 19 CASE STATISTICS

 **No updated data available**
Cases spread by community transmission at Bajo Chiquito community

¹ Data included in women over 18 years of age.

RESPUESTA HUMANITARIA EN LA COMUNIDAD 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. Additionally, there is a water committee.

- UNICEF-IFRC delivered 50 family hygiene kits. Each kit is enough for 5 people and contains shampoo, bath soap, sanitary pads, toothbrush, bar soap for washing clothes, toothpaste, hand towels, combs and toilet paper.

Recommendations

- Progress is required with setting up showers and latrines at the MRS.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT continues to provide food for migrants every ten days.

Recommendations

- It is recommended to provide differentiated feeding for pregnant women and children under 5 years of age.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Recommendations

- Accommodations must be improved, even though migrants are settled indoors, they are currently living in temporary shelters made of tarpaulins or tents.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- The Red Cross health team attended the migrant population and the community on Tuesday, July 21.

Recommendations

- It is required to provide a medical post with medicines and medical supplies for personal protection and medical care.

- It is recommended to transfer a Venezuelan person, who has schizophrenia and has no treatment.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- SENAFRONT maintains security staff that protects the community.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that the specific needs of pregnant women, children, adolescents and young people, adult, elderly, people with disabilities and/or ethnic and religious groups is addressed.

- Progress is needed in designing reference routes for people with specific protection needs.

- It is recommended to support migrants to replace lost travel documents.

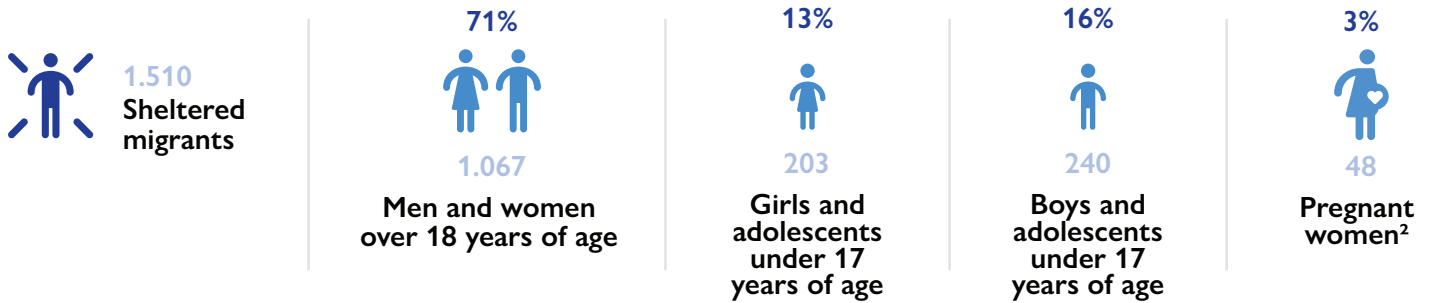
- Adequate lighting is required in the MRS, especially in the shower areas.

- It is recommended that recreational and non-formal education activities are developed for children in the MRS.

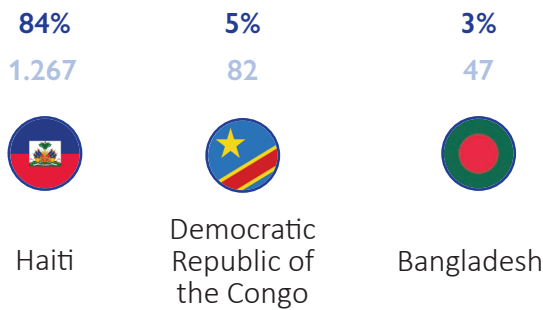
STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LA PEÑITA

23 JULY, 2020

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

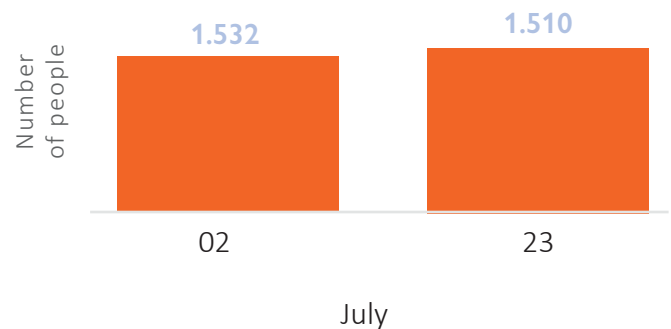


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES

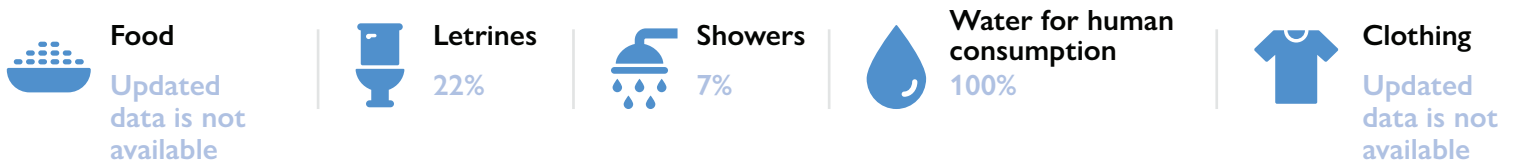


The remaining 8% corresponds to 28 nationalities from various countries in Africa, South Asia, Central and South America.

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LA PEÑITA, JULY 2020



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



COVID-19 CASE STATISTICS



No updated data available

Cases spread by community transmission at La Peñita

Identified migrants are transferred to MRS Lajas Blancas, which has been temporarily authorized to care for COVID-19 positive migrants and their contacts in Darién, as part of the health care protocol that is active in Panama.

² Fifty are included in women over 18 years of age. The updated registration is currently being carried out under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN MRS LOS PLANES

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.

Recommendations

- Progress is needed with the construction of showers and latrines in the MRS.
- It is necessary to improve the distribution and collection of water.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

- SENADAP, the Apostolic Vicariate of Darién and IOM held a coordination meeting to manage the logistics of moving two trucks of food for migrants.

Recommendations

- It is recommended to provide differentiated feeding for pregnant women and children under 5 years of age.

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Recommendations

- Progress must be made in reducing overcrowding of migrants.

HEALTH



Recommendations

- It is recommended to improve access to information for migrants when a family member is hospitalized.
- Mothers with cesarean section bleeding must return to Metetí. In addition, violence and babies have been affected, and there are many risks for newborns.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership framework, ONPAR interviewed migrants of La Peñita about their application process.
- RET joined La Peñita on Monday, 27 July to provide psychosocial care for the children, including an artist and community facilitator. The incorporation will be until December and will work with the same schedule as the Red Cross: ten days of work and four days off.

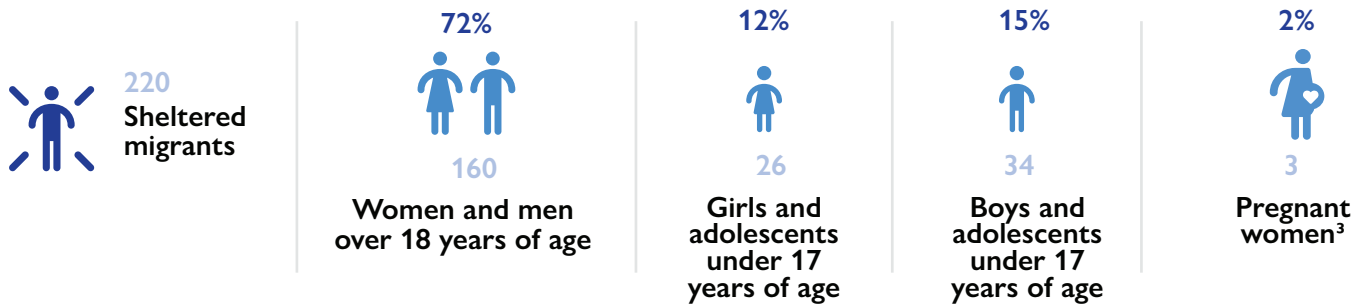
Recommendations

- It is recommended that the specific needs of pregnant women, children, adolescents and young people, adults, elderly, people with disabilities and/or ethnic and religious groups is addressed.
- There is an increase in migrant violence. La Peñita's families are leaving their homes because of the constant threats against them.
- It is recommended to support migrants to replace lost travel documents.
- Adequate lighting is required in the MRS, especially in the shower areas.
- It is recommended that recreational and non-formal education activities are developed for children in the MRS.

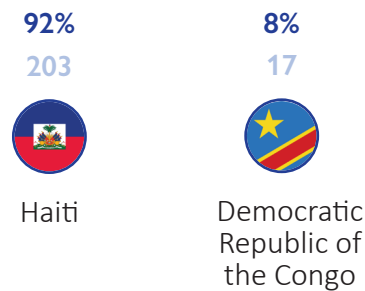
HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AT MRS LA PEÑITA

23 JULY, 2020

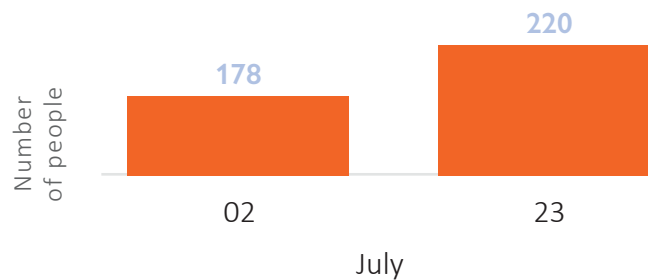
SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA



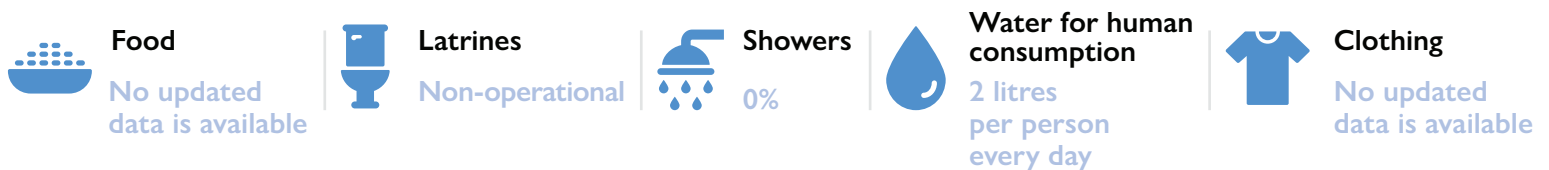
HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES



NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS, JULY 2020




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



³ Data included in women over 18 years of age. The updated registration is currently being carried out under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership.

COVID- 19 CASE STATISTICS

 **9**
Positive

 **No updated data is available**
Tests applied

 **0**
Suspected

 **220**
Recovered

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AT MRS LAJAS BLANCAS

WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION (WASH)



Implemented actions

- Under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership framework, a 10,000-litre water tank was delivered as a reserve for St. Vincent. Also, 220 hygiene kits and 60 baby kits were delivered.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that latrines and toilet batteries in need of repair actually be repaired.
- All latrines are reported to be full.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Recommendations

- It is recommended to provide differentiated feeding for pregnant women and children under 5 years of age.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- MINSA provided mother and child care on July 19.

Recommendations

- It is recommended to improve access to information for migrants when a family member is hospitalized.

PROTECTION



Recommendations

- It is recommended that the specific needs of pregnant women, children, adolescents and young people, adult, elderly, people with disabilities and/or ethnic and religious groups is addressed.
- Adequate lighting is required in the MRS, especially in the shower areas.
- It is recommended that recreational and non-formal education activities are developed for children in the MRS.

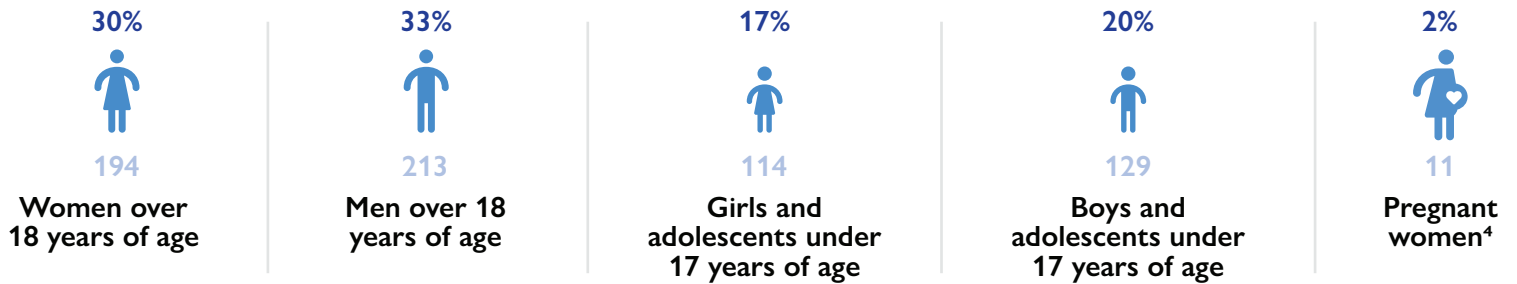
STATISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION SHELTERED AT MRS LOS PLANES

23 JULY, 2020

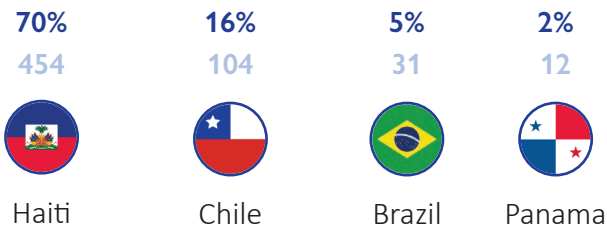
SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA



650
 Sheltered migrants

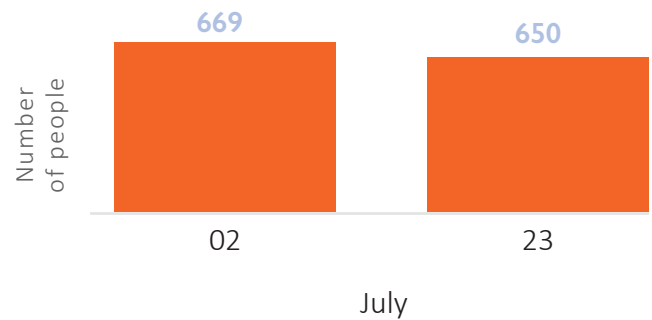


HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES

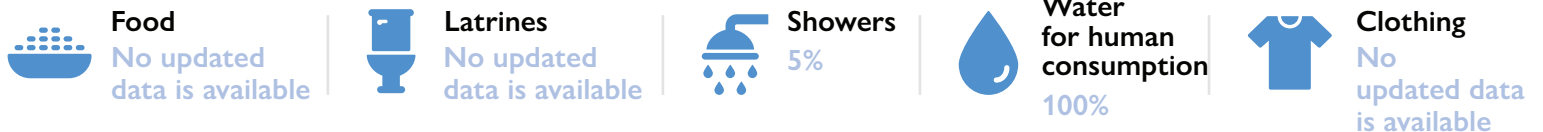


The remaining 8% correspond to 17 nationalities from various countries in South America, Africa, and South Asia.

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SHELTERED AT MRS LOS PLANES, JULY 2020



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



⁴ Data included in women over 18 years of age.

COVID-19 CASE STATISTICS



10

Cases of COVID-19 have been identified in the migration flow

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN MRS LOS PLANES

WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION (WASH)



Implemented actions

- There are two tanks of 15,000 liters that are chlorinated daily to make the water suitable for consumption. The population of the MRS is being supplied with a donation of 40,000 bottles made by the NMS to improve the water supply.

- This action has been complemented with mobile latrines that are maintained three times a week.

- The migrant population has been made aware of this issue and their collaboration has been requested to maintain hygiene in the MRS.

Recommendations

- It is recommended to improve the quality of the water, since it has a murky appearance, and migrants refuse to drink it.

- Approximately 75% of the latrines need repairs.

- Improvements are required at the dump, it is collapsed; grey and black water mixed with rainwater are spreading to the creek next to the community.

- Women and children are provided with bottled water every day, and on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the entire population is provided with bottled water.

- NMS is coordinating the transportation of food supplies such as prickly pears (71 boxes: 24 and 48) and granola (6 boxes) to the MRS.

- Canned milk is provided to children between 0 to 8 years of age, but there are currently shortages, so technical distribution support is required by health personnel.

Recommendations

- Food supply in general is required, specifically fruits, vegetables and baby formula for children and infants.

- It is recommended to extend food cooking time, although portions

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



Implemented actions

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

SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



Recommendations

- More than 75% of the infrastructure requires repair, as it is old.

- Due to the climate of the area and especially since it is built out of wood, the MRS has deteriorated notably, and repairs are recommended, especially considering that more migrants will soon be moving to the MRS.

PROTECTION



Implemented actions

- Volunteers support activities in conjunction with officials of the institutions such as cleaning, minor repairs and distribution of clothing.
- NMS is coordinating the transfer of two ping pong tables and two volleyball nets to complement the recreational supplies purchased earlier.
- There is a place identified for meetings where migrants are convened to receive important announcements.
- A series of signs and banners with important information have already been printed and are about to be installed in the languages used by the migrant population of the MRS to support the communication mechanisms.
- Coordination to care for the family who lost their baby a few days ago; psychological and psychosocial support required. This support is being verified with institutions so that the woman who has just lost her six-month pregnancy can be integrated into the psychosocial approach plan.

Recommendations

- There's a family interested in obtaining their baby's Panamanian ID and passport. However, the current COVID-19 context has complicated the application process, they have to complete the institutional applications and protocols directly, but specific restrictions limit this process.
- Different toilets by gender or age is required.
- A comprehensive psychosocial support programme needs to be developed, involving institutions and organizations with suitable staff that can support the construction of routes of referral.
- General measures have been taken from the perspective of

recommendations given by institutions such as the National Civil Protection System and the Fire Department. However, planning in this area is recommended for emergency response.

- Major electrical repairs are required.
- It is recommended that an educational program is implemented, since there is an important group of sheltered children who are of school age.

HEALTH



Implemented actions

- Health care at the MRS has been suspended with no likely date of return.
- NMS is responsible for providing information when a person is evacuated.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that migrants who had a positive COVID-19 result receive medication.
- A scorpion stung a child and was hospitalized for follow-up and observation. Fumigation is recommended.
- The MRS Los Planes does not have an ambulance service. The NMS provides this service with the MRS patrol, but it does not have the standards required for emergency transfers and is intended for multiple uses, mainly administrative staff procedures.
- It is recommended to provide access to birth control methods, such as condoms.

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