

Mixed Movements Darién and Chiriquí

JUNE 2024

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Key Figures



201,063
people have crossed
the Darien Jungle as of
June 2024.



31,049
people in June alone.



56 per cent
of those interviewed by
UNHCR in June reported
leaving their country due to
threats and attacks or
generalized violence

Context

The Government initiated the [transition process](#), culminating with the official handover on 1 July. [José Raúl Mulino](#), announced his plans to repatriate individuals entering irregularly through the Darien jungle and requested US support to finance these operations.

As of 30 June, over 200,000 people have crossed irregularly, a similar figure to the one registered during the same period last year. Although the National Migration Service (SNM) estimated a 20 per cent increase in people entering in 2024, officials consider that weather conditions and the new US policies might have reduced these rates.

Heavy rainfall persisted in Darien, swelling rivers. Authorities had to temporarily halt the transportation of refugees and migrants by canoe to prevent accidents.

After compliance issues, the Minister of Health decided not to renew Doctors Without Borders (MSF) collaboration agreement for the provision of primary healthcare in Darien province.

The Ombudsperson filed a complaint with the Public Prosecutor's Office after receiving [400 reports](#) of sexual violence in the Darien jungle. This action followed a thorough investigation of human rights violations in the area and clarified that the crimes have not necessarily occurred in the Darien province but at the Colombian-Panamanian border.

UNHCR's response

UNHCR works to support the [Government's response](#) at the Temporary Reception Centres (ETRM in its Spanish acronym) and to [host communities](#) in Darien and Chiriquí. With the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), UNHCR offers [legal support](#) to people with international protection needs, and refers individuals requiring specialized assistance to the relevant institutions. UNHCR and NRC also provide [information on the asylum system in Panama](#) and assist with refugee status applications. Through HIAS, UNHCR provides [Mental Health and Psychosocial Support \(MHPSS\)](#) and provides people in transit with [information on the risks of the route](#) through informative sessions. Through the Panamanian Red Cross (CRP), UNHCR delivers [primary health care](#) to refugees and migrants staying at the Government's ETRMs.

Key achievements



4,452

people informed on
the risks of the
journey



3,382

people informed on
the asylum system
in Panama



858

people assisted
with primary
health care



5,800

mosquito nets
distributed to the
Government and
local communities



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In Bajo Chiquito, the "Indigenous Women Mappers for the Environment Project" involves Emberá-Wounaan delegates in finding solutions to environmental issues affecting their community through digital technology and mapping exercises.



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Commemorating World Refugee Day in Darién and Chiriquí

UNHCR in Chiriquí hosted an art exhibition titled “A Place, a Refuge,” featuring photos of 11 refugee women. The Agency also organized “Refugiarte” workshop to promote peaceful coexistence and local integration. Over 200 people attended the exhibition, and twenty-four women, including refugees, asylum-seekers, and SNM officials, participated in the workshop. Moreover, the Agency held a night event, lighting the Miguel de Cervantes fountain in commemoration of World Refugee Day.

In Puerto Armuelles, UNHCR, and NRC held a panel on international protection with 22 students of the Autonomous University of Chiriqui (UNACHI). In David, UNHCR and HIAS’ “Between Lands” artistic festival had the participation of eight educational centers and the regional director of the Ministry of Education (MEDUCA). The event sensitized officials on access to education for refugees and asylum-seekers. Fifty-six people participated.

In Darien, UNHCR organized the panel discussion “Refugees and asylum-seekers Human Rights Current Challenges.” Sixty-eight secondary and university students participated. The Agency screened the movie *One Life*, based on the true story of a British humanitarian. In Alto Playona, UNHCR and NRC organized a peaceful coexistence activity with refugees, asylum-seekers, and local community members. Over 150 people participated.

Other achievements



UNHCR’s [Help Page](#) registered 10,320 visits and 11 people contacted UNHCR through its Chatbot. For more information on international protection and the asylum system, please contact us [scanning our QR code](#) →



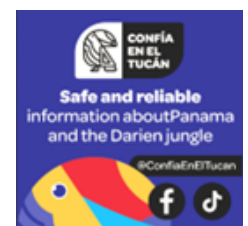
UNHCR and its partners trained over 350 Government officials on international protection and UNHCR’s mandate.



UNHCR’s protection monitoring exercise in the ETRM Lajas Blancas and Chiriquí reached 124 refugees and migrants.



In June, through social media campaign, *Confía en el Tucán*, UNHCR released 14 social media posts. This month, the campaign reached 1,450,920 visualizations on TikTok and Facebook, with 39,429 engagements.



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