



April - June 2025

Key Figures

Nearly **10,800** Refugees and asylum-seekers live in Panama, mainly from Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Venezuela.

**430** People received core relief items, including mosquito nets, sleeping mats, and kitchen sets.

UNHCR informed **719** people nationwide about Panama’s asylum system, UNHCR’s mandate, and access to rights.

Context

Panama's asylum system remains complex. While the country is party to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, its national legislation has yet to adopt the broader refugee definition outlined in the Cartagena Declaration. Limited access to documentation and restrictive labour regulations continue to impact the protection and integration of refugees and asylum-seekers.

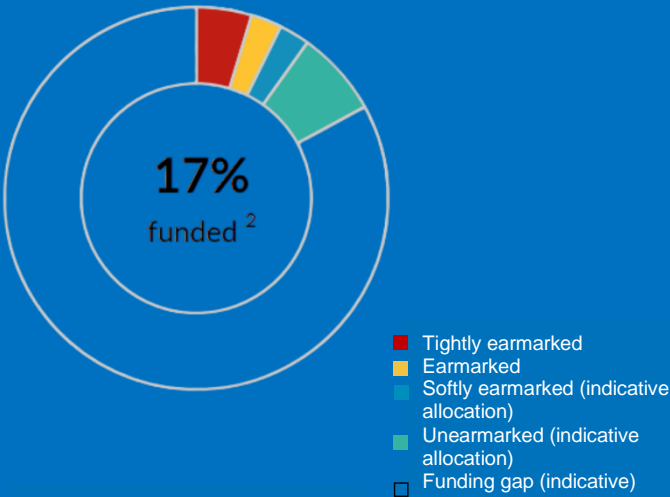
This quarter, Panama’s National Commission for Refugee Protection (CONARE) granted refugee status to 21 individuals, including eight Afghans, seven Colombians, five Nicaraguans, and one Ghanaian. UNHCR provided technical support throughout the process, contributing to the analysis and strengthening of refugee status determination procedures.

In June, authorities extended the validity of the humanitarian permits for 49 of the 299 US deportees who arrived in February, allowing them to remain legally in the country for an additional six months. The group includes Somalis, Iranians, Afghans, Russians, and Ethiopians and relies on support from private, faith-based, and international partners.

UNHCR donated two fully equipped mobile units to the Ombudsperson's Office to strengthen its capacity to address protection needs, particularly in remote and underserved areas hosting refugees and asylum-seekers. These mobile units will expand the Ombudsperson’s Office outreach and legal guidance capacity to respond more effectively to vulnerable populations.



Regional funding Overview  
as of 30 June 2025



\$53.4 million

UNHCR’s financial requirements 2025

<sup>1</sup> Financial requirement for MCO Panama in 2025, including requirements for the operations and activities in its area of responsibility in Central America and the Caribbean.  
<sup>2</sup> The percentage funded is indicative.

## UNHCR RESPONSE

UNHCR works with the Government, civil society, UN agencies, refugees, asylum-seekers, and people at risk of statelessness in Panama. UNHCR and IOM co-chair the UN inter-agency Human Mobility Group, coordinating protection and humanitarian support for refugees and migrants. UNHCR has partnerships with Fundación Espacio Creativo (FEC), HIAS, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the Panamanian Red Cross (CRP), the Pastoral of Human Mobility (PMH), and City of Knowledge Foundation (FCDS).



**Coordination with Local Authorities** | UNHCR supported the relaunch of the National Office for the Attention of Refugees (**ONPAR**)'s ID issuance system inactive since 2021, through targeted donations. The system now restores asylum-seekers' access to official documentation confirming their application is in process. UNHCR participated in the International Congress on Human Mobility and Human Rights, moderating a panel on preventing discrimination against displaced populations.



**Protection** | UNHCR trained 15 mentors from the 'Impulsa tu Negocio' project led by FCDS on international protection to enhance their support for refugee entrepreneurs. UNHCR also trained 19 students from El Colegio de Panamá to lead community activities inspired by the book 'La otra orilla', building skills in public speaking and engagement with refugee communities.

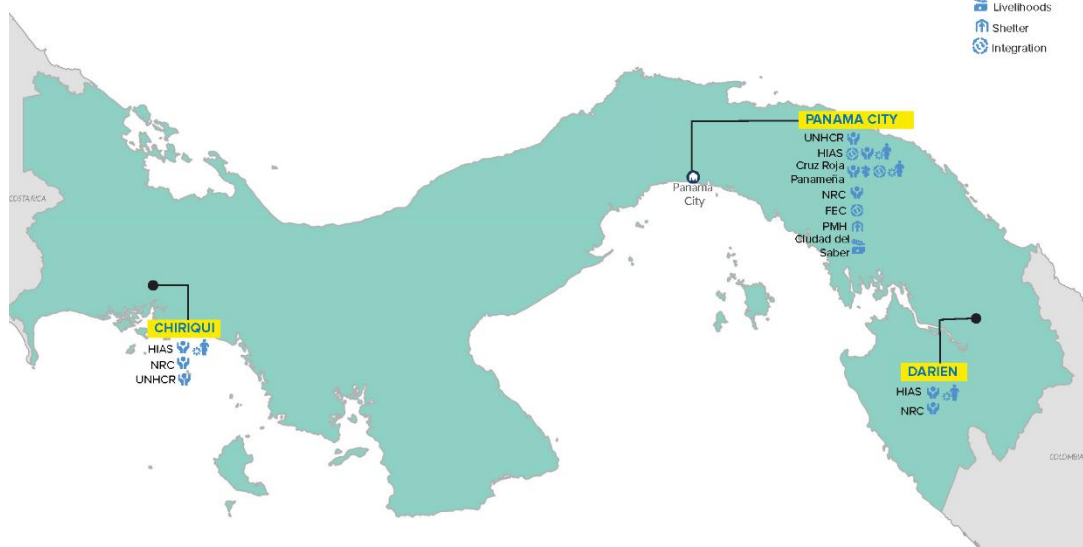


**Humanitarian Assistance** | Through CRP, UNHCR provided primary healthcare services to 30 people, including refugees and asylum-seekers, at the Government's Temporary Reception Centres (ETRM). Through HIAS, the Agency assisted 1,152 people in border areas with Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services related to traumatic experiences fleeing their home country.



**Local Integration** | UNHCR participated in the CRP's **community fair**, which welcomed some 400 people, including refugees and asylum-seekers. Students from El Colegio de Panamá led recreational activities, while UNHCR hosted a **banner** initiative where refugees shared messages about acts of solidarity from their host communities. UNHCR monitored the new inclusive facility of FDCS's 'Creciendo Juntos' programme, which provides refugees and asylum-seekers with spaces for training, livelihood support, and community-building activities.

### UNHCR's presence in Panama



UNHCR Panama MCO wishes to convey a special thank you to its donors: Australia | Belgium | Canada | Denmark | the European Union | France | Germany | Ireland | the Republic of Korea | The Kingdom of the Netherlands | Norway | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | the United States of America | World Food Programme | Private donors in the Republic of Korea, and Australia for UNHCR, the Dutch Postcode Lottery, España con ACNUR, and Japan for UNHCR.

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