



UNHCR participated in a joint mission with Copa Airlines in Los Santos. ©UNHCR/Melissa Pinel

Situation

Ten days after the 7.5-magnitude earthquake that struck Panama's Azuero Peninsula, authorities continue assessing its full impact. According to the National Civil Protection System (**SINAPROC**), 2,318 homes sustained total damage, 5,546 were partially damaged, and another 1,260 were affected to a lesser extent. Damage has also been reported to over 600 educational facilities and 120 health facilities. According to the Ministry of Social Development, 55 temporary shelters remain active and host 3,827 people. The number of injured remains at 27. However, **media** have also reported the subsequent death of a woman injured, as well as the death of an **infant** with pre-existing medical conditions, whose family had been staying in an informal shelter following the earthquake.

As of 19 October, the Institute of Geosciences reports **917 aftershocks**. While seismic activity continues, experts report it is becoming less frequent over time, despite some stronger isolated events. Preliminary assessments also indicate the earthquake triggered about 2,300 landslides, and in the **Isla Cañas** area, authorities have identified a significant ground fracture, with additional assessments ongoing to evaluate changes to the national topography.

Despite adverse weather conditions and a **green alert** issued in Veraguas and Los Santos Provinces, the government, local authorities, civil society organizations, and private sector actors have mobilized in solidarity, delivering donations and support to affected populations across the impacted areas.

UNHCR Response

UNHCR, together with other UN agencies, deployed to the affected provinces of Herrera and Los Santos as part of a **joint mission** to monitor humanitarian conditions, assess needs, and coordinate the response with authorities. The mission visited the Government's emergency collection centre in Herrera and accompanied authorities to the community of Los Pozos. In Los Santos, the delegation visited La Colorada, la Miel, and the communities of Bajo Corral and Cañas, where approximately 700 displaced residents from Isla Cañas are currently staying and continue to require shelter support.

UNHCR continues to support the Government-led response, and together with local authorities and the National Border Service (SENAFRONT) has mobilized more than 46 metric tons of core relief items (CRIs) to date. With support from the **United States**, and **Copa Airlines** (COPA), the Agency has scaled up its emergency response, combining relief distributions and field outreach in Azuero. As part of this collaboration, COPA joined UNHCR on a field visit to communities near the earthquake epicenter in Los Santos. Together, UNHCR and its partners have delivered to date:

- **300 family tents and 950 tarpaulins** for temporary shelter and to support displaced families whose homes were affected.
- **5,900 items** to support immediate shelter needs, including 1,980 sleeping mats and 3,920 blankets.
- **1,664 kitchen sets** to support affected households in meeting their essential cooking and food preparation needs.
- **4,500 mosquito nets** to reduce health risks and support the well-being of affected families.
- **1 rub hall** installed in the Las Minas community in Herrera.

About UNHCR

Since 2004, UNHCR has worked alongside national authorities, civil society and the private sector in Panama to strengthen protection mechanisms and advance solutions for refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless people and those at risk of statelessness, while also supporting host communities. Through partners including the Panamanian Red Cross (CRP), HIAS, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and the Pastoral Care for Human Mobility (PMH), UNHCR facilitates access to services, rights, and integration opportunities while helping strengthen host communities' resilience.

In response to the recent earthquake, UNHCR continues to monitor the evolving emergency, coordinate with national authorities, assess additional needs, and complement response efforts for host communities and persons with international protection needs.



View of one of the four temporary shelters established in Cañas, Los Santos Province. Approximately 200 displaced residents from Isla Cañas are currently staying at this site following the earthquake, as families remain unable to return to the island affected by a ground fracture.



Coordination with **local authorities** remained central to the response in earthquake-affected areas. During a joint UN mission, UNHCR assessed community needs and response priorities. In the picture: UNHCR MCO Panama Deputy Representative Margarida Loureiro, UN Resident Coordinator Ana Graça, and Raúl Montenegro, Mayor of Los Santos.



José Egas, UNHCR MCO Panama Representative and Pedro Heilbron, CEO of COPA, during the mobilization of CRIs to support the earthquake response. ©UNHCR/Melissa Pinel.

Useful Links

- Copa Airlines and UNHCR Partner to Support Families Affected by the Earthquake in Panama
- Video TVN Noticias: Copa Airlines supports families and communities affected by the earthquake in Panama.
- Video UNHCR on Instagram: Panama Earthquake update.
- Video SENAFRONT: Tent Deployment as Part of Operation 'Todos por Panamá'.

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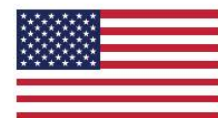


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For more information

Delia Ordoñez, Associate Protection Officer at ordonez@unhcr.org
Benedetta Pignatti, External Relations Officer at pignattb@unhcr.org

For media interviews: panpamedia@unhcr.org