

Panama

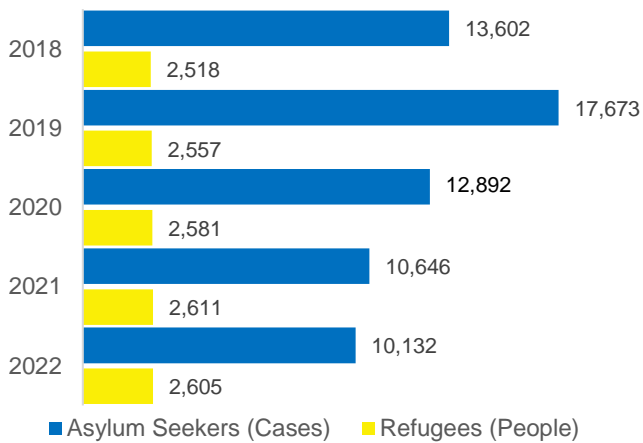
July - August 2022

Panama is home to some **13,000 refugees and asylum-seekers**. As of August 2022, approximately **144,500 displaced Venezuelans** are estimated to be living in the country¹.

During July and August, **60** refugees and asylum-seekers have been provided with legal assistance. From January to August 2022, over **102,067 migrants** crossed the **Darien Gap**, according to the

National Migration Service data. **In 2022**, more than **1,500** asylum-seekers and refugees were supported with **multipurpose cash or vouchers** to cover their basic and urgent needs.

Population of concern



*As per ONPAR, August 2022

CONTEXT

Refugees and asylum seekers in Panama are mainly from Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Venezuela. These groups, as well as their host communities, face exacerbated risks and increased vulnerabilities in local integration, mainly due to the loss of opportunities to generate an income.

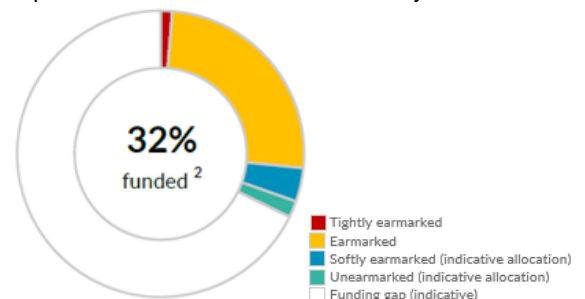
During the months of July and August 2022, Panama experienced its worst social unrest in the last three decades, with labour unions blocking main roads, a teachers' strike and the closure of small pharmacies for several days. The protests were motivated by corruption scandals, the lack of access to affordable food and medicines, as well as the high price of gas, situation that specially affect vulnerable population.

Movements of people entering through the Darien Gap (southern border with Colombia) continue to rise. As of 31 August 2022, **102,067²** people entered through Darien, setting an unprecedented record for Panama. **Venezuelans** represent the main nationality crossing through Darien, making up to **67 per cent** of the total population crossing. Routes are constantly shifting, as protection risks and humanitarian needs escalate in the region, particularly for children and women.

FUNDING (AS OF 30 AUGUST 2022)

US\$ 54.3 M

requested for the Panama Multi-Country Office for 2022



1 The financial requirements for the Panama MCO include requirements for the Coronavirus Emergency and the Venezuela Situation. **Panama** is part of the Panama Multi-Country Office since 2022 along with Belize, Nicaragua, Cuba, and the Southern Caribbean

2 The percentage funded includes indicative allocations of softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions

Migration and displacement from the women's point of view



In the framework of the Panama International Book Fair, together with IOM, OHCHR and FAO, UNHCR organized the talk "Migration and displacement from the women's point of view", to highlight the risks faced by girls and women in mix movements, as well as the international mechanisms available for their protection.

Credit: UNHCR | Viola Bruttomesso

UNHCR Response and Strategy

UNHCR works in close coordination with the Government, civil society, UN agencies, refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants in Panama. Close coordination with the National Office for the Attention of Refugees (ONPAR) is maintained to channel support and continue strengthening the asylum system in the country. UNHCR closely liaises with the Ombudsperson's Office, the Electoral Tribunal, and the National Migration Service. UNHCR co-chairs with IOM the UN inter-agency group on human mobility, which coordinates humanitarian support and interventions related to the mixed movements in Darien and Chiriquí provinces. UNHCR has established partnership agreements with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), the Pastoral of Human Mobility (PMH), Panamanian Red Cross, *Fútbol con Corazón* (FCC), and *Fundación Espacio Creativo* (FEC). Furthermore, UNHCR supports the government in implementing their commitments under the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS).

Main Activities

Alongside the government, partner organizations, civil society, development actors, and UN Agencies, UNHCR undertakes protection and solutions activities, including:



Coordination and Strengthening of Local and National Governments

- UNHCR provided training on statelessness and its recognition process to **46 officials** from 12 governmental institutions and four NGOs present in Darien.
- UNHCR held a meeting with the Vice-Minister of Government to review the specific support needed by the government to undertake the **Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework** (known as MIRPS in Spanish) pro-tempore presidency, particularly, on the drafting of commitments and priorities to present as part of the State's response to improve the asylum system and the mixed-movement situation.



Protection

- UNHCR conducted a Protection Monitoring in Darien, reaching **100 people** in four days, and referring several cases to partner Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) for legal counselling in refugee status determination procedures.
- UNHCR, IOM, and HIAS facilitated a training on differentiated treatment and specialized **Gender-Based Violence (GBV) response** for refugee and migrant survivors of GBV. The training was intended to government service providers of the Community Attention Center of La Chorrera, for Women, Adolescents and Girls Survivors of GBV.
- UNHCR provided **legal assistance to 60 persons** with international protection needs to access the asylum procedure during the months of July and August.



Humanitarian Assistance

- UNHCR through partners supported **161 persons** with multipurpose cash for food, medicines, rent payments, and/or temporary accommodations during July and August.



Durable Solutions and Livelihoods

- The Recruitment Department of ManpowerGroup, within the scope of UNHCR employability programme, Talent without Borders (Talento sin Fronteras), conducted follow-up interviews for a total of **20 refugees and asylum seekers** part of the program. The interviews allowed each candidate to validate their résumés and receive guidance in their pursuit of life-changing jobs.



Advocacy and Peaceful Coexistence

- Around **23 asylum-seekers and refugees** participated in the workshops "**Canal de Empresarias**" in the City of Knowledge (CDS in its Spanish acronym), preceding the upcoming joint UNHCR and CDS programme for **entrepreneurial refugees**.

UNHCR Panama MCO wishes to convey a special thank you to its donors: Canada, the European Union, France, Guyana, United States of America, and the UN Programme on HIV/AIDS. We also thank the fundamental support provided by donors who have contributed to UNHCR with unearmarked and softly earmarked funds: Belgium | Denmark | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom. Private donors in Australia | Canada | Germany | Italy | Japan | Republic of Korea | Spain | and the United States

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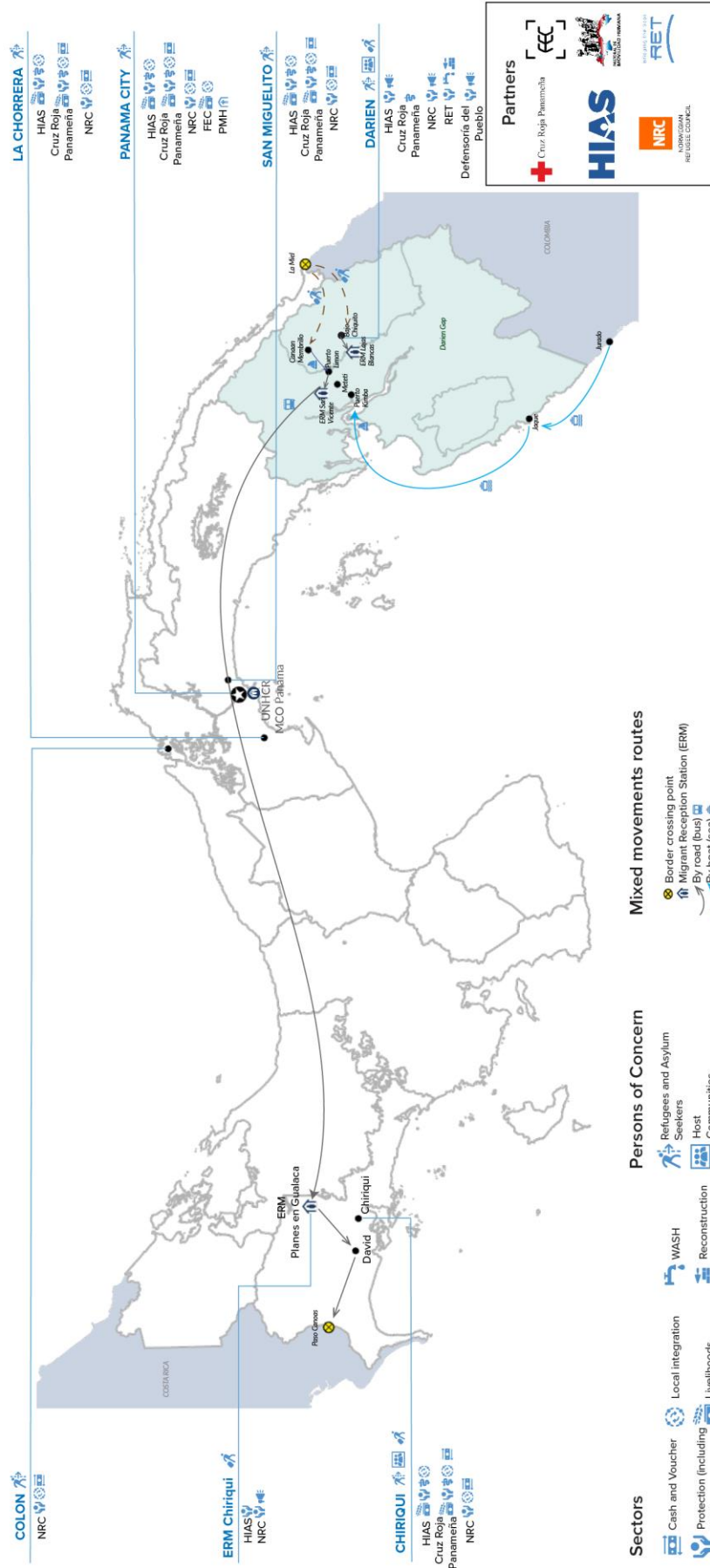
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UNHCR Panama Operational Presence

SEPTEMBER 2022

UNHCR ACNUR
La Agencia de la ONU
para los Refugiados



The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations
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