

Mixed Movements Darién and Chiriquí

AUGUST 2024



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Key Figures



238,185
people have crossed
the Darién Jungle as of
August 2024.



16,603
people in August.



53 per cent
of those interviewed by
UNHCR left their country
due to threats and attacks
or generalized violence.

Context

From January to August 2024, nearly 240,000 people crossed the Darién jungle irregularly, marking a 29 per cent **decrease** compared to the same period in 2023. July and August registered a 34 and a 19 per cent decrease in entries between months, respectively, marking the most significant drops recorded this year.

The President stated that the outcome of the **Venezuelan elections** and this country's ongoing political and economic instability could further increase irregular crossings. In the past month, Mulino questioned these electoral results and advocated for revising the electoral process to ensure transparency.

Panama, Colombia, and the US met for a third **Trilateral Meeting** to address the displacement crisis. Participants committed to incentivizing dialogue with other regional actors to reduce irregular crossings, promote alternative legal pathways for those in transit, and expand protection mechanisms with a human rights-based approach.

On 20 August, authorities conducted the **first repatriation flight** as part of Panama's and the US Memorandum of Understanding. Four flights were carried out this month, including 86 Colombians and 30 Ecuadorians. The Government prioritizes the deportation of individuals who arrive irregularly and have criminal records.

UNHCR's response

UNHCR supports the **Government's response** at the Temporary Reception Centres (ETRM in its Spanish acronym) and to **host communities** in Darién 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 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 at the Government's ETRMs.

Key achievements



3,563

people informed on
the risks of the
journey



2,036

people received
counselling and
information on the
asylum system



564

people assisted
with primary
health care



452

Mosquito nets,
blankets and
tarpaulins distributed
in the ETRM and host
communities



In August, UNHCR trained 19 SENAFRONT officials posted nationwide on international protection and the Agency's mandate. For more information on UNHCR's work in Panama, click [here](#).



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UNHCR's initiatives in Darién and Chiriquí

In Chiriquí, asylum-seekers, refugees, and UNHCR partners participated with information booths in a community fair on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention organized by the Regional Office of the Ministry of Women Affairs (MIDEM). The event raised awareness of the importance of identifying, responding to, and preventing GBV. UNHCR also participated in a forum by the Autonomous University of Chiriquí, commemorating Diplomat's Day. UNHCR briefed participants on its response to refugees, asylum-seekers, and mixed movements, including its involvement in the Human Mobility Group.

In Darien, UNHCR, NRC, and the Ombudsperson Office visited Puerto Lara and provided information on international protection and human rights defense to 170 people. On this day, the Puerto Lara community celebrated the International Day of Indigenous People, with the participation of over 300 people. UNHCR donated 110 mosquito nets to the community to prevent prevalent diseases in the rainy season.

UNHCR met with the Ministry of Environment (MI AMBIENTE) and the University of Panama for joint initiatives as part of its Innovation Project on waste management. UNHCR visited the Bajo Chiquito community and met with the community delegates (Delegadas Comunitarias) to gather feedback on the map they prepared with the Agency's support.

Other achievements



UNHCR's [Help Page](#) registered **9,520 visits** in August. For more information on international protection and asylum, please contact us by [scanning our QR](#).



UNHCR with UNICEF, expanded the monthly border protection monitoring exercise, interviewing 340 refugees and migrants.



UNHCR, through HIAS, assisted **56 people** with mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) related to traumatic experiences crossing the jungle.



[Confía en el Tucán](#) released **16 new social media posts**. In August, the campaign reached **3,154,801 visualizations** on TikTok and Facebook, with **172,008 engagements**.



UNHCR Multi-Country Office in Panama thanks the contributions from our donors in 2024



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