



REGIONAL ACTION PLAN 2023 MIRPS PRO-TEMPORE PRESIDENCY

REPUBLIC OF PANAMA



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Background

The international commitments made by our States, such as treaties, agreements, and declarations, amongst others, arise and are signed at certain historical moments, seeking to address the most important needs at that time. However, circumstances are not identical across the globe, and regions have undergone major changes.

As a consequence of the wars in Central America in the 1980s, there was a need to identify good practices and adjustable, flexible, and coherent guidelines that respond to the historical contexts of each country. Accordingly, some regional alternatives emerged that focused on the specific needs of Central America, achieving important advances, including:

- **Cartagena Declaration on Refugees**

In the city of Cartagena, the countries of the Central American region and the Contadora group, comprised of Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico, and Panama, echoed the need to make efforts to eradicate the original causes of refugee situations. The main challenge to be addressed was to achieve a declaration that would support the principles and advances for the protection of refugees in Latin America, as well as the expansion of the refugee definition to include the internally displaced, encompassing the reception of refugees from a multidimensional perspective.

- **Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action**

The governments of Latin America and the Caribbean met in Brasilia to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees and adopted the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action, agreeing on a common road map to strengthen and maintain the highest standards of protection at the international and regional level, implement innovative solutions for refugees and displaced persons, and end the plight faced by stateless persons in the region.

- **San José Action Statement**

The States of the region considered the need for comprehensive actions to improve protection and the response to the most urgent needs, such as the recognition of national interests in migration and border management, including the importance of striking an appropriate balance between State security and the respect for human rights, the applicable protection of internally displaced persons and refugees, the right to seek and receive asylum, and measures to combat human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants. Similarly, the importance of other complementary legal pathways for admission was highlighted, within the framework of national policies and programmes, such as resettlement, family reunification, humanitarian visas and other legal forms for regular, safe and orderly migration, and the importance of deepening strategic and collaborative alliances was reaffirmed.

- **Global Compact on Refugees**

Its objectives include: i) Ease pressures on host countries; ii) Enhance refugee self-reliance; iii) Expand access to resettlement in third countries and other complementary pathways; and iv) Promote conditions that allow refugees to return to their countries of origin in conditions of safety and dignity.

- **Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection**

The Declaration expresses a commitment to promote stability and assistance for communities of destination, origin, transit and return, and to promote regular channels of migration and international protection, among other points.

- **Lima Ministerial Meeting on the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection**

At this meeting, the countries made commitments under the following Pillars: i) Stability and Assistance for Communities; ii) Regular Pathways for Migration and International Protection; iii) Humane Migration Management.

- **Darién Declaration**

Identified actions included coordination with civil society organizations and international organizations; the elaboration of a roadmap at the regional level, with common points and short and medium-term objectives, including the possibility of providing humanitarian assistance, international protection, alternative complementary protection and other forms of protection; and mechanisms for regular migration and border management. At the same time, it promotes and maintains dialogue with countries of origin, transit, and destination for the joint approach to respond to extra-regional and intra-regional flows. It also provides for the expansion of international development cooperation in order to create economic opportunities in the communities of origin, with short-term impacts, to address the root causes of migration. Finally, it invites coordination with the MIRPS, as appropriate, with identified synergies in addressing these flows.

By virtue of the above, Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Panama -- as a committed region faced with the prevailing need to assume and concretely respond to its common challenges as agreed within the Global Compact on Refugees -- adopted the **San Pedro Sula Declaration** in 2017 with the objective to work in a comprehensive and supportive manner in the region through the implementation of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS). In June 2019, El Salvador joined this initiative, assuming a commitment to address the situation of displacement and the refugee population.

The MIRPS is a pioneer initiative in the application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and a concrete contribution to the commitments made regarding displaced populations, responding and promoting regional cooperation between the countries of origin, transit, and destination under the principle of shared responsibility in matters of prevention, protection, and durable solutions. It also has a participatory approach, by directly involving people with protection needs. It integrates regional and international organizations, as well as cooperating States that are members of the MIRPS Support Platform, who are committed to the humanitarian and development agenda.

Principal achievements

The MIRPS has been developed through government-led consultations with all stakeholders, including persons of concern, UN country teams, civil society, the private sector, and academia, taking a whole-of-society approach. Regional networks and organizations complement national action plans and establish regional and global responsibility-sharing mechanisms to give MIRPS a regional dimension.

Some of the direct results of the MIRPS include: Mexico has adopted measures to guarantee refugees' access to training, employment programmes and financial services. Guatemala has made further progress in its commitment to providing refugees with access to employment support services. In Costa Rica, refugees living in vulnerable circumstances enjoy access to government-run welfare programmes, and Honduras has begun a project to map potentially contested land in future areas of return, laying the groundwork for a more participatory approach to solutions.

Each year, a MIRPS member country assumes the Pro-Tempore Presidency to lead the regional objectives. It is assigned on a rotating and alphabetical basis among the member countries. Its objectives are aimed at achieving the commitments of the Member States and MIRPS workplans from a regional perspective to respond to the differentiated needs of refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, and returnees with protection needs. Likewise, it facilitates the exchange of information and good practices between the MIRPS countries, as well as leads joint efforts to mobilize international cooperation and raise the visibility of the displacement situation in the region before the international community.

Main achievements of the Pro-tempore Presidencies

Pro-tempore Presidency 2019: Mexico

- Promoted reflections on the required procedural changes, to simplify procedures to improve the quality of asylum systems.
- Promoted the strengthening of national mechanisms for the implementation of the MIRPS, including issues of health, documentation, access to work, and financial inclusion.
- Promoted linkages with local governments in the promotion of protection spaces and for the inclusion of refugees.
- Encouraged the creation of comprehensive care routes, prioritizing the protection of children.

Pro-tempore Presidency 2020: El Salvador

- Promoted the improvement of protection mechanisms for a comprehensive response to forced displacement in the region, promoting training and the creation of public policies.
- Established the mechanism for the designation of the MIRPS Pro-tempore Presidency, to be assumed in a rotational and alphabetical manner.
- Promoted inter-state coordination to advance the quantification of contributions made to promote the MIRPS.
- Consolidated formal participation mechanisms for civil society in the MIRPS.
- Made significant efforts to mobilize complementary resources for the establishment and strengthening of the MIRPS Fund within the OAS.

Pro-tempore Presidency 2021: Guatemala

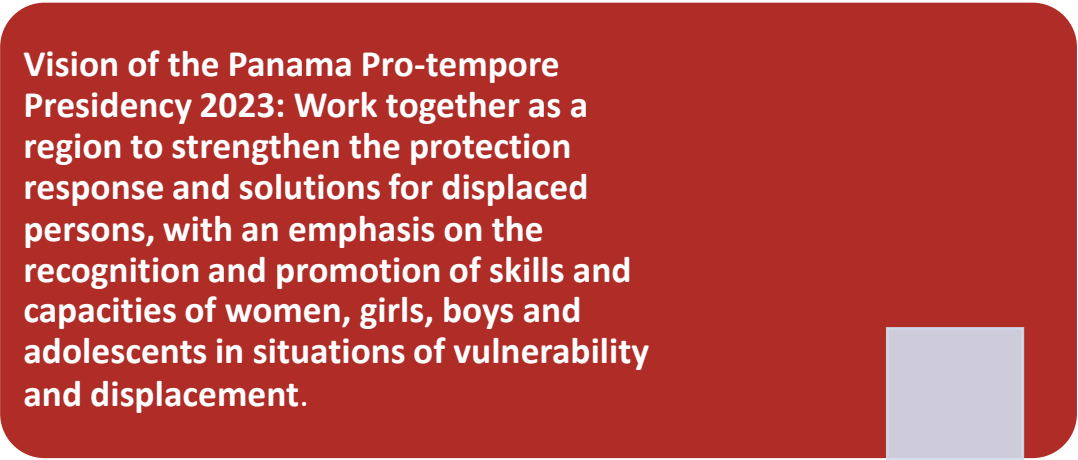
- Promoted virtual plenary meetings of the MIRPS technical teams.
- Specified the methodologies of the working groups.
- Promoted public-private dialogue and interactions with regional mechanisms, national commissions, and refugees.
- Organized a Solidarity Event for the Support Platform to support the development of projects in favor of communities in need of international protection together with supporting countries, the private sector, and foundations.

Pro-tempore Presidency 2022: Honduras

- Developed a regional strategic vision of the MIRPS based on updating the National Action Plans through regional dialogues.
- Promoted the creation of National Coordination Groups, as spaces for dialogue between diplomatic representations, development cooperation agencies, UN agencies, civil society and other stakeholders.
- Held a consultation on displacement in the context of disasters and climate change.
- Promoted regional dialogue through the MIRPS Working Groups and political spaces within the framework of the OAS and other relevant regional mechanisms such as SICA, the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), among others.

Vision and priorities of the Panama Pro-tempore Presidency 2023 Action Plan

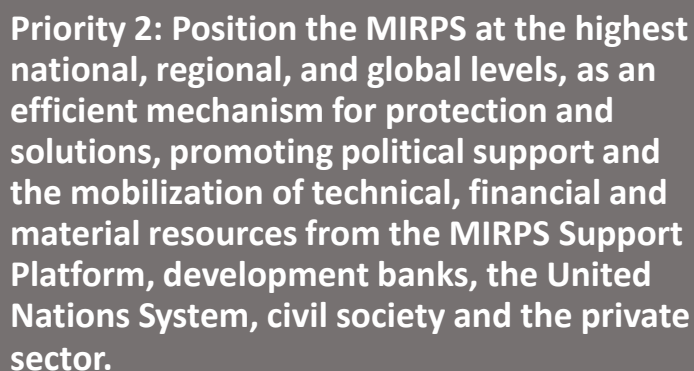
Vision of the Panama Pro-tempore Presidency 2023: Work together as a region to strengthen the protection response and solutions for displaced persons, with an emphasis on the recognition and promotion of skills and capacities of women, girls, boys and adolescents in situations of vulnerability and displacement.



Priority 1: Strengthen regional dialogue and cooperation to facilitate the progress of the national commitments of the National Action Plans.



Priority 2: Position the MIRPS at the highest national, regional, and global levels, as an efficient mechanism for protection and solutions, promoting political support and the mobilization of technical, financial and material resources from the MIRPS Support Platform, development banks, the United Nations System, civil society and the private sector.



Priority 1: Strengthen regional dialogue and cooperation to facilitate progress on national commitments in national action plans.

Objective 1.1 - Strengthen processes aimed at comprehensive protection and care services for all displaced persons in need of protection.

Objective 1.1 Actions

The regional actions of this objective will be coordinated with the Working Group on Strengthening Asylum Systems.

- Coordinate meetings between States to learn about experiences and good practices in registration and other procedures in asylum/refugee and protection systems.
- Organize meetings with the purpose of understanding existing weaknesses and strengths that allow for improving and expediting the processing of cases with protection needs.
- Promote spaces for dialogue between countries to share practices in the context of extra-regional mixed movements.
- Promote the development of regional protocols for the identification of people in need of international protection in mixed movements, including good practices.
- Organize high-level events to increase the visibility of the MIRPS in strengthening asylum systems, within the framework of the II Global Refugee Forum and in coordination with the Asylum Capacity Support Group.

Objective 1.1 Results

- Reduced processing times for asylum applications and the generation of statistical reports with disaggregated data.
- Advancements in the use of technology for registration, documentation, and coordination of care for displaced persons in need of protection.
- Strengthened capacities of personnel involved in the comprehensive protection and care services for all forcibly displaced persons in search of international protection.
- Articulation of the state response through a referral system for specific needs that includes returnees with protection needs.

Objective 1.2 - Strengthen national capacities to facilitate the integration of displaced persons, in coordination with local authorities and host communities.

Objective 1.2 Actions (related to internal displacement)

The following actions will be coordinated with the Working Group on Internal Displacement:

- Promote prevention and community protection programmes.
- Strengthen national capacities for the production and dissemination of statistics on internal displacement, in coordination with the institutions governing national statistics.
- Promote the identification and mapping through geolocation of zones with incidences of displacement.
- Promote the recovery of public spaces in prioritized municipalities.

Objective 1.2 Actions (related to local integration)

The following actions will be coordinated with the Working Group on Local Governance:

- Develop partnerships to increase the number of 'cities of solidarity' that host displaced persons.
- Strengthen the technical capacities of municipal personnel in charge of caring for displaced persons.
- Guarantee adequate municipal spaces for the attention, orientation, and protection of people with protection needs.
- Facilitate access to basic health care and mental health care services, in coordination with civil society.
- Develop sports, music, and dance activities for children in coordination with community leaders.

Objective 1.2 Results

- Improved and strengthened protection and integration responses for internally displaced persons.
- Support provided for the inclusion, resilience, and participation of displaced people, especially girls and boys in host communities.
- Improved access to health services for displaced persons.
- Increased visibility of best practices in local governance among countries and international institutions with similar experiences.

Objective 1.3 - Recognize and promote the capacities and competencies of people who have been forcibly displaced and are in vulnerable situations, for their economic and social integration, with an emphasis on women, adolescents, girls, and boys.

Objective 1.3 Actions

The actions below will be coordinated with the Working Group on Jobs and Livelihoods.

- Develop professional training courses through professional training institutions that allow the certification of competencies, learning, and development of skills
- Create public-private partnerships to generate job opportunities through job boards and permanent links that redirect displaced people to jobs.
- Develop activities related to improving skills and access to livelihoods, through non-governmental organizations and government institutions.
- Develop and implement the Regional Strategy for the Recognition of Labour Competencies that facilitate labour integration in Central America and Mexico.

Objective 1.3 Results

- Recognition and identification of the abilities and capacities of displaced populations, with emphasis on the female and adolescent population.
- Expansion of training opportunities available for the female and adolescent population to acquire and improve skills that allow their social integration.
- Establishment of job boards for displaced persons, with an emphasis on women, through partnerships with the private sector or others.

Priority 2: Position the MIRPS at the highest national, regional, and global level, as an efficient mechanism for protection and solutions, promoting political support and the mobilization of technical, financial, and material resources from the MIRPS Support Platform, development banks, the United Nations System, civil society, and the private sector.

Objective 2.1 - Strengthen the commitments made within the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) and raise them to the highest level.

Objective 2.1 Actions

- Promote the creation of the MIRPS Charter.
- Promote the organization of meetings of the National Coordination Groups as a tool to strengthen cooperation with the Support Platform and other strategic actors at the national level.
- Identify coordination opportunities with other regional platforms such as the RCM, SICA, the Quito Process and the Working Groups that have been formed within the framework of the Los Angeles Declaration.
- Disseminate information on MIRPS activities through the national and international media.
- Make MIRPS progress visible at the II Global Refugee Forum and align MIRPS plans with the commitments that will be presented at the Forum.
- Organize meetings at the highest level between States (Ministers) in regional meetings in order to strengthen the assumed regional commitments (2 virtual meetings and 1 in-person).
- Promote the strengthening of comprehensive evaluation mechanisms for the MIRPS Regional Plan.
- Promote joint actions between the MIRPS Pro-tempore Presidency with the Pro-tempore Presidency of the Inter-American Commission of Women.
- Participate in political and technical forums to position the MIRPS before different national and international organizations.

Objective 2.1 Results

- Participation of the governments of the MIRPS member countries is promoted and encouraged at the highest level.
- The work and priorities of the MIRPS are positioned and made visible in different regional and global forums.
- Approval of the MIRPS Charter by the Member States.

Work methodology

The priorities, objectives, actions, and results proposed will be carried out through:

1. Organization of technical meetings, such as:

- Virtual plenary meetings, which include reports on thematic progress by the leading countries of the Working Groups.
- Technical sessions of the Working Groups
- Meetings with the National Coordination Groups
- Meetings with the MIRPS civil society mechanism
- Joint sessions with representation from the private sector
- Follow-up meetings with the Support Platform

2. Visibility of the MIRPS in High-Level Events, which include:

- Ministerial thematic meetings
- High-level meetings within the framework of the OAS
- VI MIRPS Annual Meeting
- II Global Refugee Forum

3. Preparation of key documents, such as:

- Specific documents of the Working Groups, which highlight good practices, recommendations, and roadmaps for the achievement of regional goals.
- Meeting minutes
- MIRPS annual report
- Political declaration
- Report of the outgoing Pro-tempore Presidency
- Public information documents – webpage

4. Creation of a section on the MIRPS website to share experiences, good practices, and knowledge of work on the protection and inclusion of displaced persons within the framework of the MIRPS.

At the end of its tenure as Pro-tempore Presidency, Panama will formally deliver the Memoir of the outgoing Pro-tempore Presidency, participate at the highest level during the handover of the Pro-tempore Presidency, create a banner or emblem that symbolizes the membership of the MIRPS Pro-Tempore Presidency, and will organize a technical meeting between the outgoing and incoming Pro-Tempore Presidencies during the handover.

Calendar (Note: the schedule of activities may change during the year, to include other opportunities to promote the MIRPS).

Activities	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Technical Meetings												
Virtual Plenary Meetings	24			20			20			19		
First virtual sessions of the Working Groups (WG)												
Sessions of the WG on Strengthening Asylum Systems												
Sessions of the WG on Internal Displacement												
Sessions of the WG on Jobs and Livelihoods												
Sessions of the WG on Local Governance												
High-Level Events												
Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (OAS)												
Committee on Migration Issues (OAS)												
Cities Summit in Denver, United States Within the framework of the Los Angeles Declaration												
OAS General Assembly												
United Nations General Assembly 2023												
VI MIRPS Annual Meeting												
Preparatory sessions for the Global Refugee Forum (with Permanent Missions in GVA)												
II Global Refugee Forum												
Other activities												
Presentation of the Regional Action Plan to the Permanent Missions in Geneva and the OAS												
Submission of the draft MIRPS Charter and start of negotiations for its approval at the Annual Meeting												



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