



Safe Passage: Seeking Asylum in the U.S. from the Darien Gap

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How can we make migration safer for people as they cross the Darién Gap between Colombia and Panama to claim asylum in the United States?





Darien Gap

Colombian Migration Context

Nearly 250,000 migrants passed through in 2022, up from 133,000 in 2021. Prior to 2021, about 10,000 migrants passed annually.

Countries of Exit: Venezuela, Ecuador, Haiti, Cuba, China, India, Afghanistan, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo.

Demographics: 78% men, 28 % women, 16 % children and adolescents.





Constantly changing geopolitical and legal context

Human rights violations, stigma, violence, crime, discrimination, and exploitation

Involvement of criminal organizations

Economic challenges for host societies, their political systems, and health services

Misinformation about legal options for migrants.

Numerous Health Challenges

NGO & CBOs in Colombia

UNHCR

International Organization on Migration (IOM)

Red Cross

CARE

Mercy Corps

International Rescue Committee

HIAS

UNICEF

Heartland Alliance

Opción Legal



Legal Communication Project



Regular webinars with legal clinics at Colombian Universities to share information about US laws, policy changes and common asylum profiles



Mobile legal clinics with UW Madison law students in collaboration with Colombian legal clinics to provide individual consultations to migrants

Partners include Universidad de los Andes, Universidad del Rosario, & Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia, Opción Legal, Heartland Alliance

Public Health Project



Augmenting
access to useful
rapid tests
(malaria,
dengue, Covid,
etc.)



Vector-borne
emergent
tropical disease
surveillance



Information
about health
issues along the
journey

Currently working to establish relationships with government officials in key regions to begin working with NGO and CBO partners on this aspect of the project.

Grants Sought & Received

Research Forward Grant, Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation and Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, UW-Madison, 2023-2025, \$434,000. **Awarded**

US Department of State, Population, Refugees and Migration, 2023-2025, \$300,000. Applied

Centers for Disease Control, Global Emergency Response and Recovery Partner Engagement. 2023-2028. Applied



GHI Involvement & Assistance

- GHI and One Health Centers are Co-PIs and key partner
- Assistance with local contacts and logistics in Colombia
- Networking with stakeholders and audiences working on migration and health
- Inclusion in collaborations and cross-unit funding opportunities