

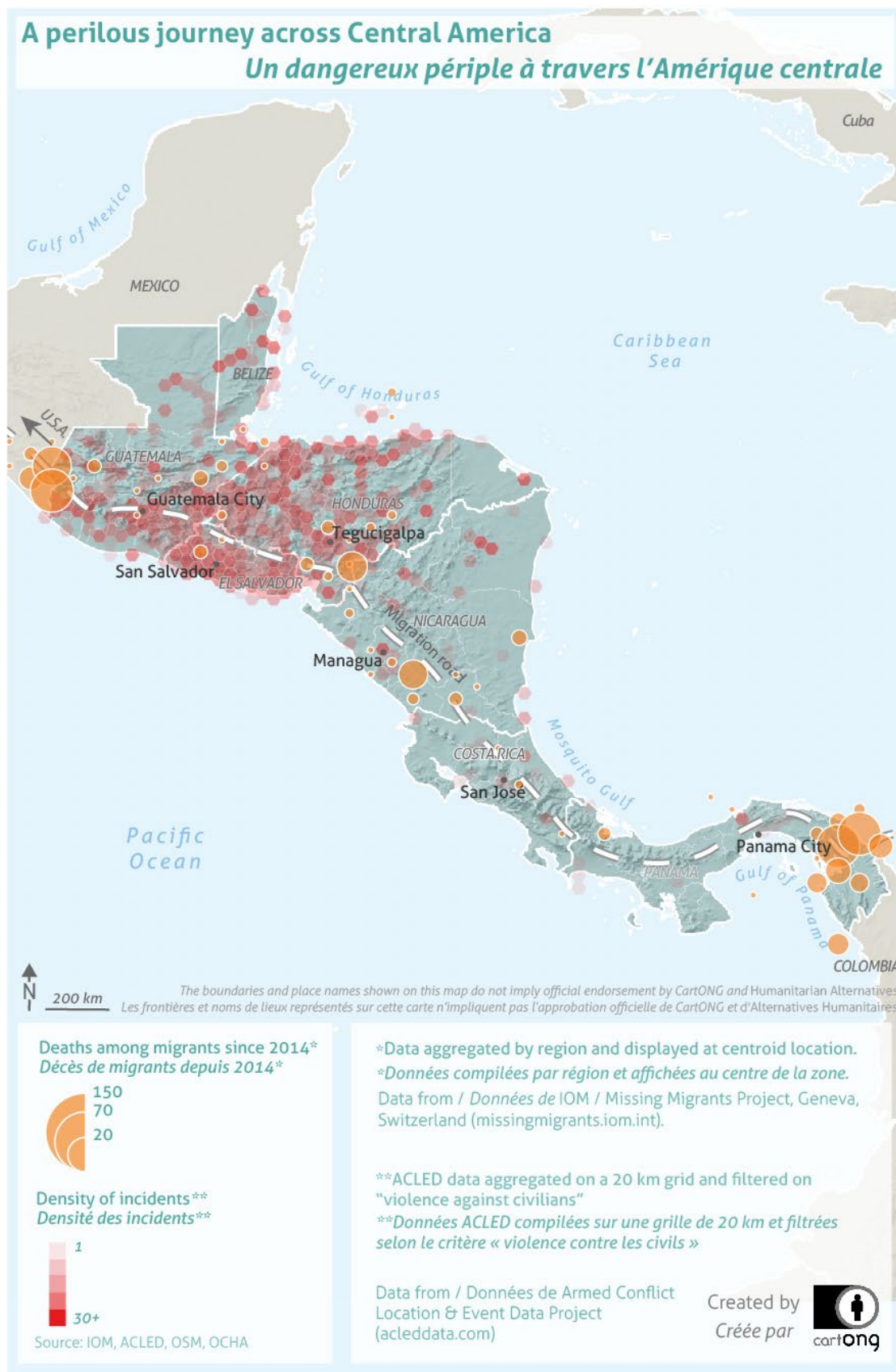
A perilous journey across Central America

CartONG • Association spécialisée en gestion de l'information

Full credit to our partner CartONG for drawing up a map of this “forgotten subcontinent” that presents the scale of the migrations that take place there. It also tells us about the dangers facing people on the move and the instability it can cause in local societies.

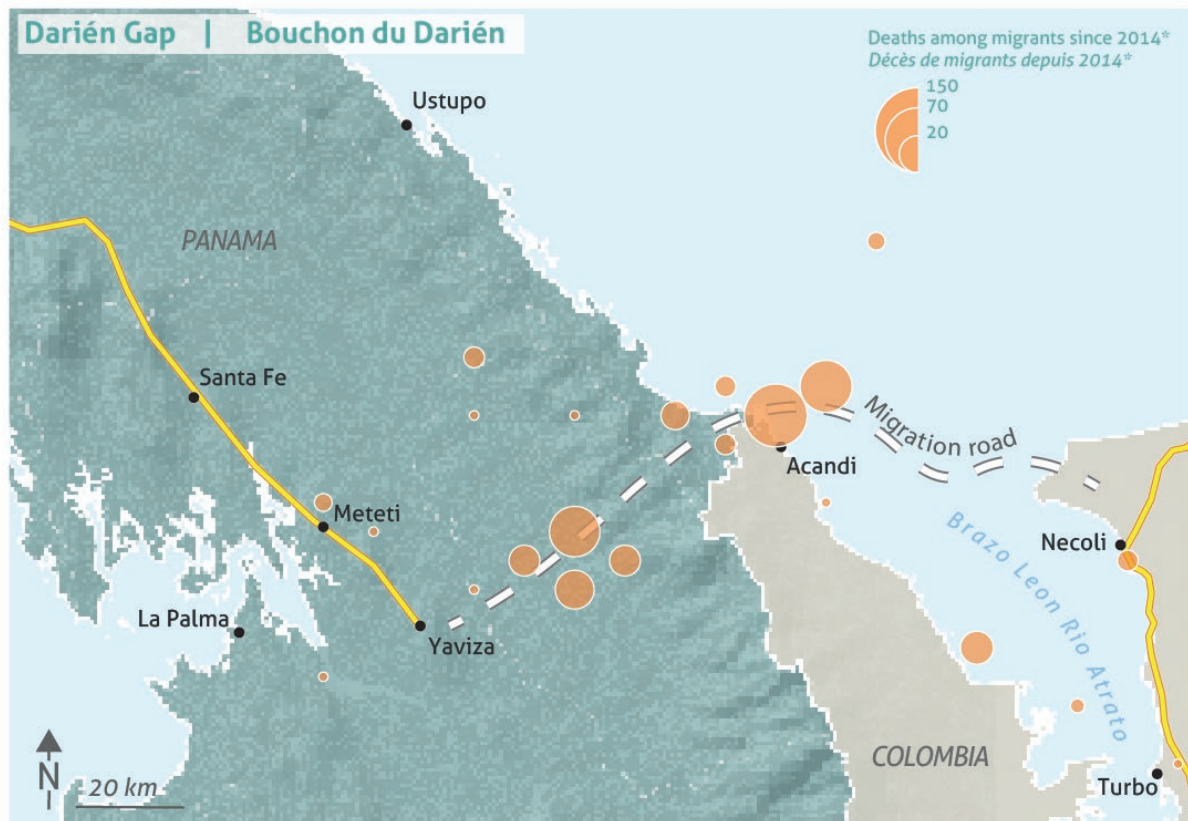
Each year, an estimated 150,000 to 400,000 individuals embark on a perilous trek from Central America to Mexico. Mexican authorities report the lower figure, while non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil organisations argue for the higher one. This journey is fraught with extreme hardships and dangers. The International Organization for Migration has documented 407 deaths in Central America since 2014, but this is considered a significant undercount. Therefore, rather than providing a precise death toll, the aim of our map is to show how reported fatalities are distributed around the area. Two areas are the most hazardous for people on the move.

The first is the “Northern Triangle of Central America,” encompassing El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. In fact 92% of the incidents recorded in Central America are within those 3 countries. Since 2018, 6138 incidents have been reported in this area, with 96.5% committed by gangs (3.5% by soldiers and the police).



HUMANITARIAN ALTERNATIVES

The second is the Darién Gap, a jungle expanse between Colombia and Panama, which is particularly treacherous due to its rugged terrain and lack of roads. Migrants often cross via boat through the Brazo Leon Rio Atrato, but local authorities report numerous boats disappearing without a trace making it nearly impossible to establish an accurate count of deaths and injuries. This inaccessibility allows criminal gangs to operate with impunity, leading to high levels of insecurity. Healthcare professionals report that six out of every ten women and girls experience sexual violence in this area. The Darién Gap is a “black hole” for data, with most incidents going unreported, meaning that it does not appear as a high-insecurity zone according to ACLED data.



Biography

CartONG • Created in 2006, CartONG is a French H2H NGO specialized in the full scope of Information Management – including GIS, Mobile Data Collection and data processing – whose mission is to put data at the service of humanitarian, development and social action projects. CartONG acts as a multidisciplinary resource and expertise center, accompanying its partners’ strategies and operations, as well as supporting the aid community as a whole by producing documentation, building capacities and raising awareness on the technical, strategic and ethical challenges of digital technologies. Discover the IM Resource Portal, where curated IM resources relevant for the sector are selected and published by CartONG (www.im-portal.org), and its Learning Corner centralizing practical toolkits (www.im-portal.org/learning-corner).

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CartONG, “A perilous journey across Central America”, *Humanitarian Alternatives*, no. 24, November 2023, pp. 12–15.
<https://www.alternatives-humanitaires.org/en/2023/11/15/a-perilous-journey-across-central-america/>