



BIENNIUM 2020-2021 IN NUMBERS

Highlights of Achievements in Health

PAHO



Pan American
Health
Organization



World Health
Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE
AMERICAS





Introduction

Throughout the 2020-2021 biennium, the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) played an instrumental role as catalyst, convener, and trusted broker during an unprecedented health emergency. Through its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, PASB, Member States and partners saved lives while continuing to advance the regional public health agenda, demonstrating extraordinary resilience.

The Report of the End-Of-Biennium Assessment of the PAHO Program Budget 2020-2021 / First Interim Report on the Implementation of the PAHO Strategic Plan 2020-2025 documents the achievements and challenges of the biennium and our collective lessons learned and recommendations moving forward. This brochure highlights some key achievements attained during the biennium. The full report is available in the PAHO Program Budget Portal (open.paho.org).

Health emergencies



- Enhanced capacity for **timely detection of the SARS-CoV-2 virus** was established in 35 countries and territories.

- The COVID-19 **Genomic Surveillance Regional Network**, with at least 26 laboratories in 15 countries, was established to track SARS-CoV-2.

- 348 international shipments totaling

747 tons



of medical supplies and equipment from PAHO's logistics hub in Panama were delivered to 36 countries.

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- **47 safer and greener ("smart") health facilities** are now providing health care across seven countries in the Caribbean.

- **The deployment of 100 national emergency medical teams (EMTs) and opening of 129 alternative medical care sites** provided **6,899 inpatient beds** and **1,078 critical care beds**.



- 15 countries and territories delivered **life-saving operations** in response to other **health emergencies**.

- **649 situation reports, 481 daily summaries, and 76 epidemiological alerts and updates** were developed and disseminated.

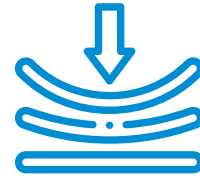
- **No cholera** cases were confirmed in Hispaniola during the biennium, thus continuing the absence of transmission since February 2019.



- **Critical reagents and supplies for molecular detection of arboviruses** were distributed to 11 countries.

Health systems and services

- Countries continued **efforts to strengthen health systems resilience**, increasing health investment in sustained improvements toward achieving universal health with equity and efficiency.



- More than 30 COVID-19-related courses were delivered to **1 million health workers** throughout the Americas, and the PAHO Virtual Campus registered on average 40,000 new health workers every month over the last two years.
- To effectively manage COVID-19 surges, **intensive care capacity** was **rapidly scaled up** in most countries in the Region.



- The PAHO Regional Revolving Fund for Strategic Public Health Supplies (the Strategic Fund) procured over **\$550 million in medicines and public health supplies** on behalf of 31 participating entities, benefiting over **70 million people**.
- Member States negotiated nearly \$5 billion in approved loans and grants from donors and international financial institutions to **improve essential health services**, expand testing and genomic surveillance, and **increase vaccination coverage**. The PASB provided advocacy and strategic guidance to some countries.
- The Caribbean Regulatory System (CRS) **issued 145 product recommendations** to its Member States, **including nine COVID-19 vaccines**.

- **32** countries had COVID-19 **national preparedness and response plans** in place, while many enhanced their research and epidemiological surveillance.



Health throughout the life course, determinants of health, and health promotion

- The **neonatal mortality rate continued to decline**, reaching 7.4 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2020.



- The **under-5 mortality rate declined**, reaching 13.2 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2020.

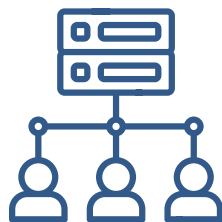
- **Equity profiles were developed** for social inequalities in maternal, child, and adolescent health for **21 countries** of Latin America and the Caribbean.

- Mexico and Uruguay adopted the interventions of the Familias Fuertes program as a national strategy. **More than 60,000 families received virtual training** to adopt the interventions outlined on the program.



- Virtual training on care for older persons reached over **41,000 health professionals in 80 countries**.

- Mechanism was established for monitoring outcomes in women and newborns through a collaborative database on maternal health and COVID-19. This **database is the largest published to date on maternal mortality and the virus** and allows for evidence-based decision making.



- **Updated analysis of the mother-to-child transmission of syphilis, including impact of the pandemic**, was completed in Argentina, Bolivia, Honduras, Paraguay, and Peru, using the Perinatal Information System Plus.

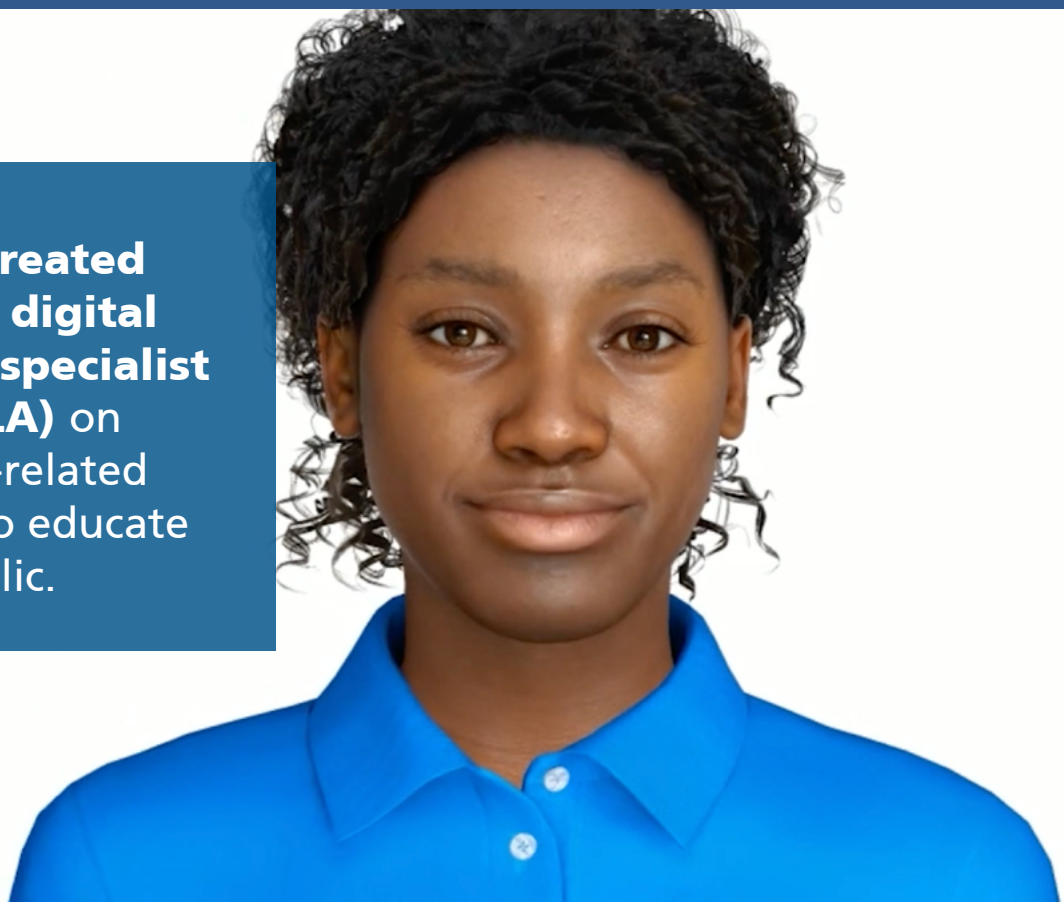
- PASB promoted COVID-19 **vaccination of pregnant women** and the professionals who care for them.


Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and their risk factors, malnutrition, mental health, violence, and injuries

- **HEARTS** in the Americas Initiative was expanded, with **21 countries under implementation**. A total of 1,045 primary care centers are participating in the program, including 306 new health centers added in 2021. These centers cover an aggregate population of 8.2 million in the catchment areas, including an additional **2.1 million persons in 2021**.
- **CureALL Americas** initiative on childhood cancer in collaboration with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital **rolled out in more than 12 countries**.
- **34 countries** and territories now have **an approved mental health policy or plan**, with emphasis on the development of community-based mental health care.
- **All South American countries** are now in compliance with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).



- **PAHO created the 1st digital health specialist (PAHOLA)** on alcohol-related topics to educate the public.



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- In Latin America and the Caribbean, **91% of people with HIV on antiretroviral therapy reached viral suppression** in 2020.

Prevention, control, and elimination of communicable diseases

- **34 Member States adopted the WHO “treat all” policy for HIV/AIDS treatment and care**, and 71% use a drug dolutegravir (DTG)-based first line regimen for HIV treatment, as recommended by WHO.
- The **elimination agenda continued to advance**. El Salvador was certified free of malaria. Dominica was certified for elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis.
- The **case-fatality rate due to dengue fell** from 0.056% of cases in 2018 to 0.042% in 2020.
- **33 Member States have sustained the elimination of measles**, and **all Member States have sustained the elimination of rubella and congenital rubella syndrome**.
- **15 of the 17 countries** with vectoral transmission of **T. cruzi (Chagas disease)** were able to **maintain control** of the main vectors.
- **15,000 health workers** were trained on the new guidelines for clinical diagnosis and treatment of dengue, chikungunya, and Zika.

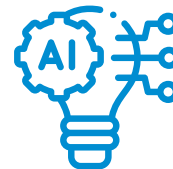


- PASB worked with Member States for the introduction and **roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccines** while maintaining routine immunization services.

Information systems for health, evidence, and research

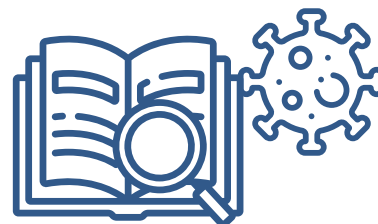
- As part of PAHO's work to help countries **strengthen** their **information systems for health (IS4H)**, maturity assessments were completed in all countries and territories using financial contributions from Canada, Spain, the USA, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Susan Buffett Foundation, and **\$600 million in investment loans** from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).
- Member States adopted two policies: the **Roadmap for the Digital Transformation of the**

Health Sector in the Region of the Americas, and the Policy on the Application of Data Science in Public Health Using Artificial Intelligence and Other Emerging Technologies.



- Three critical platforms advanced:
 - a) **Health in the Americas**, with an analysis of potentially avoidable premature mortality using data for 33 countries¹;
 - b) **Core Indicators update** for all countries and territories²;
 - and c) the **SDGs monitoring portal**³.

- PAHO IRIS, also known as PAHO's Digital Library, made available **2,834 documents which received more than 39 million accesses/interactions**. Of these documents, **2,101 were on COVID-19**.



Equity, gender, ethnicity, and human rights



- **Over 20,000 people** benefited from PAHO webinars on gender-based violence, vaccination, and adolescent health.

- **First-of-its-kind publication, Gendered Health Analysis: COVID-19 in the Americas**⁴. The report reviews morbidity and mortality in specific populations, the mitigating national responses, and socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19, all through a gender equality lens.

1 More information available at <https://hia.paho.org/en>.

2 More information available at <https://opendata.paho.org/en/core-indicators>.

3 More information available at <https://www3.paho.org/ods3/en/home/>.

4 Pan American Health Organization. Gendered Health Analysis: COVID-19 in the Americas. Washington, DC: PAHO, 2021. Available from: <https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/55432>

Leadership, governance, and enabling functions



- **PAHO remained an authoritative voice in the Americas**, calling for solidarity and equity to mitigate and manage COVID-19, including addressing vaccine hesitancy and infodemic management.



- The **Organization provided constant and evidence-based political, strategic and technical guidance on the pandemic** at the highest levels of national governments and the United Nations and inter-American systems.

- As part of PAHO's technical cooperation **to ensure access to quality, safe, and effective medicines and health technologies**, the Organization procured **\$2.84 billion in life-saving medicines and essential supplies** on behalf of Member States. The Organization became one of the top 10 United Nations agencies carrying out procurement activities.
- PASB developed a **new policy to prevent and address any sexual exploitation and abuse** of people

who depend directly or indirectly on services that the Organization provides.

- Innovative communication approaches shared with nontraditional partners **allowed PAHO to expand its outreach to broader audiences and mobilize additional resources.**



Moving Forward

As we move forward to **protect, recover, and build stronger** in 2022-2023, we must continue facing the pandemic with ingenuity and determination while strengthening the Region's health systems. We must redouble our efforts to build resilient, equitable, and well-financed health systems based on primary health care. Most important, we must look for new avenues to reach the individuals and communities left behind. The pandemic has given us a unique opportunity to keep health high on the political agenda and at the center of sustainable development, and we must seize it.

At PAHO, we continually look for partners to support our mission and work with our Member States. It is through our innovative and high-impact partnerships that we can leverage the skills, knowledge, technologies, and resources of the public, private, and non-profit sectors to extend the scope of programs, foster cooperation, and innovate as we strive together, to achieve the highest attainable standard of health.

PAHO is the partner of choice for public health in the Americas because we are uniquely positioned to address complex health challenges, facilitate policy negotiations, and find effective and sustainable solutions over time. As we forge stronger bonds with our current partners, we welcome new collaborators in our commitment to achieving the targets in the Sustainable Health Agenda for the Americas and the Sustainable Development Goals while improving health and well-being in every country of the Region and ensuring that no one is left behind.





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