Health is a **systemic** outcome

Ferdinando Regalia
Division Chief, Social Protection and Health
Inter-American Development Bank
The pandemic exposed much of what we already knew about the challenges for improving health in the Americas.

The challenge ahead is to identify lines of action that help us go beyond the “old normal”.
Healthcare services declined sharply in 2020, including management of NCDs

Overall, non-COVID healthcare services declined throughout the region.

Routine public health functions were disrupted.

NCD consultations were affected.
COVID-19 alarmed society regarding many familiar challenges …

- The **quality** of healthcare services is often poor, uneven, and inequitably distributed.
- Healthcare provision is mostly **curative**, **fragmented** and process oriented.
- The terrible toll of **NCDs** because of **comorbidities** contribute to vulnerability to the virus.
- The frequent struggle to align priorities, funding, and healthcare service performance.
...and by exposing vulnerabilities that were less familiar

- **Public health functions** were put under enormous pressures
- **Inequities** in healthcare access and quality have been **sharp and visible**
- **Public administration** has been **stressed**, trying to reconcile fiduciary control systems with the need for rapid response
- **Disease categories** are not useful if they lead us to compartmentalize: NCDs and COVID-19 are a syndemic
- Where data and digitized information are **lacking**, service management and disease management are **difficult**

[Image of IDB logo]
In the midst of this tragedy, we are seeing some silver linings.

Governments can move faster and more innovatively than previously thought.

The digital transformation of health has moved particularly quickly.

Innovations are also happening in management and cross-sector coordination.
Lines of Action: Going Beyond the Old Normal

Health is a systemic outcome: Primary prevention is essential, especially for the growing burden of NCDs.

Improving quality of healthcare service is the goal that can drive change.

The digital transformation is essential to having the information necessary for managing services and people-centered care.

Fiscal Sustainability: Focusing on results, with efficiency, quality, and equity, is critical in a fiscally-constrained world.
Thank you