

# RESPONSE STRATEGY & DONOR APPEAL

June – December 2026



# PAHO



Pan American  
Health  
Organization



World Health  
Organization

Americas Region

# VENEZUELA EARTHQUAKES

Version - 29 June 2026

**Saving lives today.  
Restoring health services for  
tomorrow.**



**PAHO EMERGENCY RESPONSE APPEAL**

**USD \$23,893,000**

Required immediately to address urgent priority health care needs and protect the lives of the Venezuelan people affected by the two recent devastating earthquakes of 24 June 2026.

## SITUATION HIGHLIGHTS

On **24 June 2026**, two powerful earthquakes (M7.2 and M7.5) struck north-central Venezuela, causing one of the country's most devastating natural disasters in decades. The earthquakes affected densely populated urban areas already facing a prolonged humanitarian crisis and severely weakened health system, compounding existing vulnerabilities and creating an acute public health emergency.

As of 27 June, more than **1,430 people have lost their lives**, over **3,200 people have been injured**, and hundreds remain missing. More than **1,400 buildings have been damaged**, with La Guaira declared a disaster area and extensive destruction reported across Caracas, Miranda, Yaracuy and Carabobo. Essential infrastructure—including electricity, water supply, transport and telecommunications—has been severely disrupted, hampering emergency operations and access to health care.

The earthquakes have overwhelmed an already fragile health system. Hospitals are operating beyond capacity, surgical services face rapidly growing backlogs, and critical shortages of trauma supplies, medicines, blood products, laboratory reagents and essential equipment threaten the continuity of lifesaving care. Damage to health facilities, interruptions in water and electricity, and shortages of specialized health personnel are further compromising service delivery.

At the same time, the risk of secondary public health emergencies is increasing. Population displacement, overcrowded shelters, disrupted vaccination services, poor water and sanitation conditions, and reduced disease surveillance heighten the risk of outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases, arboviral diseases and other communicable diseases. The psychological impact on affected communities and exhausted health workers is substantial and requires immediate attention.

### Key Figures



## PRIORITY HEALTH NEEDS

### 1. Saving lives through emergency trauma, surgical and critical care

Thousands of injured people continue to require emergency medical treatment, while referral hospitals remain overwhelmed by the sustained influx of trauma, orthopedic, neurosurgical and critical care patients. Preliminary assessments reveal overcrowded emergency departments, rapidly growing surgical backlogs, shortages of essential medicines and consumables, and limited intensive care capacity. Some hospitals are delivering care in temporary outdoor areas following structural damage, while ambulance and referral systems are operating under severe strain.

Immediate support is needed to expand emergency care capacity, deploy Emergency Medical Teams and specialized personnel, strengthen patient referral systems, and provide trauma kits, surgical supplies, osteosynthesis materials, intensive care equipment, blood bank supplies, and essential medicines. These interventions are critical to reducing preventable mortality and disability during the acute phase of the emergency while restoring the capacity of hospitals to provide lifesaving care.

### 2. Restoring safe and functional health services

The earthquakes have further weakened a health system already affected by years of humanitarian crisis. Health facilities have sustained structural damage, while disruptions to electricity, water supply, telecommunications, oxygen systems and logistics continue to compromise service delivery. Several hospitals are functioning only partially or under extreme pressure, forcing the evacuation of patients, limiting specialized services and disrupting routine health care.

Over the next six months, urgent support is required to assess the structural safety and operational functionality of hospitals, restore essential infrastructure and utilities, establish temporary clinical capacity where needed, and rehabilitate priority health services. Particular attention is needed to maintain maternal and newborn care, pediatric services, dialysis, oncology, chronic disease management and emergency surgery, ensuring that people continue to access essential health care throughout the recovery period.

### 3. Ensuring uninterrupted access to essential medicines, vaccines, laboratory services and medical logistics

The response is constrained by critical shortages of medicines, trauma supplies, laboratory reagents, vaccines and medical equipment, compounded by disruptions to transport and supply chains. Hospitals are reporting insufficient stocks of emergency medicines, consumables and diagnostic materials, while laboratory capacity has been affected at a time when rapid diagnosis and disease surveillance are essential. Continued management of deceased persons also requires specialized equipment, including body bags and refrigerated storage capacity. Resources are urgently needed to procure and distribute essential medicines, laboratory reagents, blood bank supplies, medical equipment and emergency health kits; replenish strategic emergency stocks; strengthen cold chain and logistics systems; and ensure the rapid delivery of lifesaving supplies to affected hospitals and communities. Investments in these areas will allow the health system to continue functioning while meeting rapidly evolving humanitarian needs.



#### 4. Preventing secondary public health emergencies

The earthquake has significantly increased the risk of disease outbreaks and secondary public health emergencies. Population displacement, overcrowded shelters, damaged water and sanitation infrastructure, interrupted immunization services and weakened disease surveillance create favourable conditions for the transmission of communicable diseases. Venezuela also continues to face pre-existing threats from measles, diphtheria, malaria, dengue, chikungunya, yellow fever, Oropouche and other epidemic-prone diseases.

Support is needed to strengthen disease surveillance and early warning systems, restore laboratory diagnostic capacity, reinforce vaccination activities, improve infection prevention and control, support vector control and environmental health measures, and ensure adequate water, sanitation and hygiene conditions in health facilities and temporary shelters. Early investments in these interventions will help prevent avoidable outbreaks that could further overwhelm the health system and prolong the humanitarian crisis.

#### 5. Protecting the health and wellbeing of affected communities

Beyond the immediate physical injuries, the earthquakes have generated profound psychological, social and protection-related impacts. Thousands of people have been displaced, families remain separated, and health workers are operating under extreme physical and emotional stress. Mental health and psychosocial needs are growing rapidly, while the collapse of forensic services, challenges in casualty registration and the management of missing persons are placing additional strain on affected communities and response systems.

Financial support is required to provide mental health and psychosocial support services, strengthen risk communication and community engagement, improve health conditions in shelters, support the safe management of deceased persons, restore family links and strengthen protection-sensitive health coordination. These actions are essential to preserving dignity, reducing long-term health consequences and helping affected communities recover while reinforcing the resilience of the health system.

## PAHO'S IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

As the specialized health agency of the Inter-American System and Regional Office for the World Health Organization, PAHO has activated its Incident Management System and is leading the health response in close coordination with the Ministry of Health, Civil Protection, the Health Cluster, United Nations partners and humanitarian organizations.

PAHO's immediate response operations already include:

- Activation of its regional and country emergency coordination mechanisms;
- Deployment of surge personnel from PAHO's Regional Response Team, including multidisciplinary health and engineering assessment teams;
- Support to rapid health needs analysis and infrastructure damage assessments of priority hospitals and other affected healthcare facilities including evaluation of hospital functionality, essential services, lifelines, WASH supplies, patient flows, referral pathways and other urgent operational needs;
- Activation of the Emergency Medical Team Coordination Cell, with **38 international Emergency Medical Teams and Specialized Care Teams** identified, including one Type 3 EMT already deployed to La Guaira;
- Mobilization of a **4-ton emergency shipment** of trauma kits, medicines, field equipment and emergency supplies from PAHO's Regional Strategic Reserve in Panama;
- Delivery of emergency medical-surgical supplies and body bags to national authorities; and
- Initiation of urgent procurement of vaccines, medicines, laboratory supplies and emergency countermeasures.

While these actions are helping address immediate needs, significantly greater resources are urgently required to sustain the response and support the restoration of essential health services over the coming months.



# PAHO'S RESPONSE STRATEGY

## Overall objective

To reduce preventable mortality, morbidity and suffering among populations affected by the Venezuela earthquakes by supporting the immediate delivery of lifesaving health services while restoring the operational capacity of the health system over the first six months of the emergency response.

## Strategic objectives

PAHO's response strategy focuses on six mutually reinforcing strategic objectives that address both immediate humanitarian priorities and the foundations for early health system recovery.

### Strategic Objective 1. Save lives through timely emergency medical care

Support national authorities to provide timely, quality trauma, surgical, critical and emergency medical care for injured populations through the coordination of Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs), procurement of emergency medicines and medical supplies, support to patient referral systems and strengthening hospital surge capacity.

### Strategic Objective 2. Restore the functionality and safe operations of essential health services

Ensure that affected populations continue to access essential health services by supporting rapid assessments of priority hospitals and primary health care facilities, verifying structural safety, operational functionality, service continuity and referral pathways. Based on these assessments, PAHO will support the prioritization of immediate recovery actions, temporary clinical capacity where required, and the rehabilitation or reorganization of critical services, including maternal and newborn care, pediatric services, dialysis, oncology, chronic disease management, non-deferrable surgery, and mental health services.

### Strategic Objective 3. Ensure equitable access to essential medicines, vaccines and medical countermeasures

Strengthen health logistics and supply chain systems to rapidly procure, transport and distribute essential medicines, vaccines, laboratory reagents, blood bank supplies, medical equipment and emergency health supplies while reinforcing national health logistics, including cold chain continuity, in-country warehousing, last-mile distribution to priority health facilities and affected communities, stock monitoring and quality assurance for in-kind donations.

### **Strategic Objective 4. Prevent, detect and respond to infectious hazards with epidemic potential**

Reduce the risk of disease outbreaks and other public health threats in affected areas, shelters and health facilities by strengthening early warning, epidemiological surveillance and laboratory diagnostics and rapid response capacities through the strengthening of syndromic and event-based surveillance, outbreak investigation, sample referral and laboratory confirmation, targeted immunization activities, infection prevention and control, environmental health, WASH measures and vector control. These actions will focus on priority epidemic-prone diseases, including vaccine-preventable diseases, arboviruses, respiratory infections, diarrheal diseases and other public health threats exacerbated by displacement and service disruption.

### **Strategic Objective 5. Protect the health and wellbeing of affected populations**

Protect the health and wellbeing of affected populations by supporting community-based health actions, risk communication and community engagement, mental health and psychosocial support, and the mitigation of health risks in shelters and displacement sites. PAHO will support surveillance and referral mechanisms in shelters, continuity of care for people with chronic diseases, maternal and child health needs, targeted support for older persons, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

### **Strategic Objective 6. Enhance health coordination, emergency management and early recovery**

Enhance health coordination, emergency management and early recovery by supporting national authorities and health partners in the planning, prioritization, implementation and monitoring of the health response. PAHO will facilitate coordination with the Ministry of Health, Civil Protection, the Health Cluster, United Nations agencies, humanitarian partners and donors; strengthen health information management, and support the identification of response gaps, priority actions and resource requirements for the health response and transition from emergency response to early recovery.

### **Cross-cutting approaches**

Across all strategic objectives, PAHO will promote equity, protection of vulnerable populations, gender-responsive programming, disability inclusion, accountability to affected populations, environmental sustainability, localization, and strengthened coordination with national authorities, United Nations agencies, humanitarian partners and development institutions.



**EMERGENCIA**  
HOSPITAL JOSE MARIA VARGAS

CAF  
COMITÉ ADMINISTRATIVO FINANCIERO  
DE LA UNIÓN PANAMERICANA  
DE CAMBIOS

## Target Areas and Population

PAHO's emergency response will prioritize **La Guaira**, the area most severely affected by the earthquakes, while supporting the network of referral hospitals and health services in the Capital District (Caracas), Miranda and other neighboring states that are receiving large numbers of injured patients and ensuring continuity of specialized care. Activities will be continuously adapted as detailed damage and needs assessments become available.

La Guaira has experienced catastrophic structural damage, with widespread destruction of homes, public infrastructure and health facilities. Search and rescue operations remain ongoing, hospitals are operating well beyond their normal capacity, and many communities continue to face disruptions in access to essential services, including health care, electricity, safe water, sanitation and transportation. Health facilities in Caracas are simultaneously managing large numbers of referrals from La Guaira, placing additional pressure on an already fragile health system. Over the six-month implementation period, PAHO aims to support approximately **700,000 people living in the municipalities most severely exposed to the earthquake**, including populations directly affected by injuries, displacement and the loss of homes and livelihoods, as well as communities experiencing indirect impacts resulting from the disruption of health services and critical infrastructure. This includes people requiring emergency trauma and surgical care, patients whose routine treatment has been interrupted, pregnant women and newborns, children, older persons, people living with chronic diseases and disabilities, and individuals requiring mental health and psychosocial support.

The response will also benefit the broader population served by referral hospitals in La Guaira and Caracas, where the earthquakes have severely disrupted service delivery. As hospitals operate beyond capacity and several facilities continue to function only partially because of structural damage or shortages of staff, medicines and essential utilities, hundreds of thousands of people who depend on these facilities for emergency, maternal and newborn, pediatric, oncology, dialysis and chronic disease care remain at risk of losing access to lifesaving health services. Restoring the operational capacity of these hospitals is therefore essential not only for those directly injured by the earthquakes but also for safeguarding access to essential health care for the wider population.

Beyond physical injuries, the earthquakes have generated profound psychosocial and public health consequences. Thousands of people have been displaced or evacuated to temporary shelters, many families are mourning the loss of relatives or searching for missing loved ones, and communities continue to experience repeated aftershocks and uncertainty. These circumstances increase the risk of post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depression and other mental health conditions, while overcrowded shelters and disruptions to water, sanitation, vaccination and disease surveillance elevate the risk of communicable disease outbreaks. PAHO's response will therefore combine lifesaving clinical care with public health interventions, mental health and psychosocial support, disease prevention and the restoration of essential health services to help affected communities recover safely and with dignity.

## FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

PAHO is appealing for **US\$23.9 million** to support the first **six months** of the health emergency response and early recovery, complementing national efforts and the broader humanitarian response.

The appeal will enable PAHO to support approximately **700,000 people living in the most severely affected municipalities**, while strengthening referral hospitals and health services serving millions of additional people affected by disruptions to health care.

Strategic Objective	Key Response Activities	Budget (US\$)
<b>1. Save lives through emergency medical care</b>	Coordination and strengthening of emergency clinical care capacities, operational support to scale up trauma and surgical care, referral systems, ICUs, procurement of trauma supplies, blood bank and emergency medical supplies.	<b>3,867,000</b>
<b>2. Restore functionality and safe operations of essential health services</b>	Health facility structural and functionality assessments, temporary health facilities, rehabilitation of critical services, restoration of water, electricity and oxygen systems, reorganization / reactivation of health services networks.	<b>4,350,000</b>
<b>3. Ensure access to medicines, vaccines and medical countermeasures</b>	Procurement of medicines, vaccines, laboratory reagents, medical equipment, logistics, cold chain, strategic reserve replenishment and distribution	<b>7,742,000</b>
<b>4. Prevent, detect and respond to infectious hazards with epidemic potential</b>	Disease surveillance, laboratory diagnostics strengthening, outbreak investigation, targeted vaccination campaigns, infection prevention and control, WASH, environmental health and vector control.	<b>3,819,800</b>
<b>5. Protect the health and wellbeing of affected communities</b>	Risk communication, mental health and psychosocial support, community engagement, and mitigation of health risks.	<b>3,323,200</b>
<b>6. Coordinate health sector partners and deliver timely response operations</b>	Health Cluster and response coordination, information management, rapid assessments, emergency planning, and transition to recovery.	<b>791,000</b>
<b>Total Funding Requirement</b>		<b>23,893,000</b>

### Expected impact

Over the next six months, this appeal will enable PAHO to support the Ministry of Health and health partners to **maintain lifesaving emergency care, restore essential health services, intensify and strengthen disease surveillance and outbreak prevention**, ensure uninterrupted access to essential medicines and vaccines, coordinate international health assistance, and **accelerate the recovery of the health system in the areas most severely affected** by the earthquakes.

## A CALL FOR SOLIDARITY

The health consequences of these earthquakes extend far beyond the immediate search-and-rescue phase. Thousands of injured people require ongoing care, hospitals remain overwhelmed, and vulnerable populations face increasing health risks as the country begins the long process of recovery.

PAHO calls upon governments, international financial institutions, humanitarian donors, philanthropic foundations, development partners and the private sector to provide **flexible and timely financial contributions** to this appeal.

Every contribution will directly strengthen Venezuela's health emergency response, save lives, restore essential health services, prevent disease outbreaks and support the recovery of communities affected by this unprecedented disaster.

**Together, we can help ensure that no one is left behind in the aftermath of this devastating emergency.**



# HOW TO SUPPORT THIS APPEAL

**Generous donations from the international community allow PAHO to deliver its technical cooperation and deploy its operational and logistics support to address existing and emerging public health challenges impacting the countries and territories of the Americas.**

The financial requirements outlined in this appeal are pivotal to providing lifesaving health assistance and protective services to communities affected by emergencies without leaving anyone behind. PAHO ensures it will distribute funding most efficiently and where needed, in coordination with public health authorities, United Nations agencies, civil society organizations, and other humanitarian partners.

Here are some ways private or public organizations and individuals can contribute to this donor appeal.



## DONATING DIRECTLY TO THIS APPEAL

Financial contributions from governmental aid agencies, multilateral institutions, foundations and philanthropic organizations, and other public and private sector partners are among the most valuable and effective forms of support for health emergency response. The main characteristic of a financial donation is its flexibility to support an agile response. The resources obtained can be used quickly and efficiently, responding to the most acute needs and ensuring that the funded actions fully align with the local priority public health actions.

Donating organizations are invited to contribute cash to support one, several, or all priority actions highlighted in this appeal. To donate to PAHO, please contact Julie Mauvernay ([mauvernj@paho.org](mailto:mauvernj@paho.org)) or [eoc@paho.org](mailto:eoc@paho.org).

Individual donations can also make a difference and help save lives by supporting the delivery of essential supplies and critical assistance to people in need. Individuals can contribute to PAHO's Health Emergency Appeal by mailing checks to PAHO, 525 23rd St NW, Washington, D.C., 20037.



## DONATING IN-KIND RESOURCES AND SERVICES

PAHO encourages the private and public sectors to align response efforts to this Appeal's priority lines of action. Donations from corporations must comply with PAHO's guidelines and roadmap for engagement with the private sector.

To make an in-kind donation of goods and services, please contact Julie Mauvernay ([mauvernj@paho.org](mailto:mauvernj@paho.org)) or [donate@paho.org](mailto:donate@paho.org) to guarantee coherent priorities, minimize gaps and duplication in the health response, and ensure quality assurance of the goods offered.

PAHO appreciates and thanks in advance its donors for their generous contributions to support the delivery of its humanitarian health assistance throughout the Region. PAHO will report contributions to this Appeal on its webpage to acknowledge and give visibility to donors' generosity, report on funding received, and identify remaining financial gaps.

**Help us provide lifesaving health assistance and protective services to Venezuelan communities affected by the earthquakes, without leaving anyone behind.**



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