COLOMBIA PAHO/WHO COUNTRY COOPERATION STRATEGY 2024-2026



INTRODUCTION

PAHO/WHO, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MSPS), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation of Colombia and key stakeholders, through an open dialogue, have worked jointly to formulate this Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) for the 2024-2026 period. In this strategy, Health Equity, in agreement with the government, is placed at the center of the agenda as the foundation for protecting the lives of the population.

The seven health priorities agreed upon with the country are aligned with the National Development Plan 2022-2026, in a commitment to make “Colombia, World Power of Life” a reality, and with the Ten-Year Public Health Plan of Colombia 2022-2031, the Havana Peace Agreement, the PAHO Strategic Plan 2020-2025, the WHO General Programme of Work 2019-2023 and the UNSDCF 2024-2027.

ABOUT US

With more than 122 years of existence, PAHO is the world’s oldest international specialized health agency; it serves as the WHO Regional Office for the Americas. Colombia has been a member of PAHO since June 1933, and through health cooperation, joint work has been carried out to advance toward universal health, with the aim of improving individual health and the living conditions of the population.

It currently has a team of 64 people based in Bogotá and in several territories with high demand for technical cooperation.

PARTNERSHIP ENVIRONMENT

PAHO/WHO partnerships foster cooperation and innovation in new ways of advancing health. These synergies with multilateral and bilateral cooperation agencies have made it possible to support the country on development and humanitarian issues. Humanitarian aid partners are brought together through the 92 members of the Health Cluster. Work with the MSPS and its affiliated entities is ongoing and is reflected at the territorial level with local health partners.

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Colombia is classified by the OECD as an upper-middle-income country. It is territorially organized into 32 departments, 1,102 municipalities and 12 districts.

GDP grew steadily at a rate of 7.3% in 2022, and inflation, driven by multiple factors including the La Niña phenomenon and the depreciation of the peso against the dollar, reached 13.12%. Public health expenditure in 2022 reached 6.14% of GDP, a drop of 0.93 points compared to 2021, when expenditure was 7.07% of GDP. Health in Colombia is a fundamental right; however, the fragmentation of the health system and the provision of services by insurers, mostly private, prevent effective access. A sector reform proposal to guarantee this right is currently before Congress. The large differences in the health status of populations are directly linked to the level of development of the territories. According to the latest Sustainable Development Report 2023, covering 166 countries, Colombia ranks 76th in progress toward the SDGs.

PROGRESS ON HEALTH OUTCOMES

Colombia faces major public health challenges, marked by deep social and territorial inequalities. Despite progress in health insurance coverage and achievements such as the elimination of neglected tropical diseases (onchocerciasis), measles and leprosy, gaps persist in access and health outcomes. Public health expenditure in 2022 was 6.14% of GDP, a decrease compared to previous years. Factors such as forced displacement, mass migration and multidimensional poverty heighten vulnerabilities, especially in regions such as La Guajira and Chocó. Communicable diseases, preventable cancers, and maternal and child mortality are prominent problems, aggravated by the pandemic.

KEY CHALLENGES

The health reform under consultation seeks to address inequities through a preventive and predictive health model, prioritizing PHC and comprehensive territorial networks. In addition, mental health policies and cost-effective strategies focused on the SDH need to be strengthened in order to move toward a more equitable system.

Although close to 98% of the country’s population is covered by health insurance, deep territorial and population gaps persist in guaranteeing access to health care.

For more information visit the link: www.paho.org/colombia



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND DELIVERABLES

01 Action on the social determinants of health and intersectoral work to identify and address health inequities

DELIVERABLES

- Strengthened institutional and territorial capacities for health-based decision-making, evidence generation and accountability.
- Intersectoral action formulated to address social and environmental determinants and climate change in the design and implementation of social and health policies that promote equity.
- An updated and visible system for monitoring health inequities and access barriers and gaps.

02 Health governance, health sovereignty, inter-institutional coordination, decentralization of responsibilities, health management and accountability

DELIVERABLES

- Closing gaps through the development of mechanisms and instruments for institutional organization and management, social participation and accountability to strengthen health governance processes.
- Support processes to strengthen regulatory capacity for the evaluation of medicines, vaccines and products of public health interest, in line with the health sovereignty policy.

03 Health governance, health sovereignty, inter-institutional coordination, decentralization of responsibilities, health management and accountability

DELIVERABLES

- Strengthened capacities for the establishment, organization, management and monitoring of comprehensive and integrated territorial health networks as a strategic pillar for advancing toward universal and equitable care for the population.
- Include elements of the PHC-based preventive and predictive health model, incorporating technical, instrumental and technological innovations, in order to improve the capacity to respond to the health and well-being needs of the Colombian population.

04 Health workforce development as the cornerstone of the health system

DELIVERABLES

- Implement intersectoral management actions for the health workforce in the areas of education, employment, working conditions, commitment, and occupational health and safety, with a territorial, care-centered and universal approach.
- Collaborative work strategies that ensure the consistency and quality of health training and continuing education, in line with the health and well-being needs of the Colombian population.

05 An information system that enables informed and timely decision-making in the health system

DELIVERABLES

- Strengthen and develop information systems, fostering information and knowledge management through observatories and health research networks, and driving innovation in public health.
- Data and information technology management, providing technical advice on the implementation of ICD-11 as a key element of health information systems.

06 Emergency preparedness and response under the IHR and the One Health approach

DELIVERABLES

- Coordinated and effective health emergency response systems.
- An integrated surveillance system (epidemiological and environmental), including the community, for epidemic threats, under the IHR and the ONE HEALTH approach.

07 Strengthened capacities to implement the PAHO initiative for the elimination of communicable diseases

DELIVERABLES

- Technical advice on framework-related topics within the Disease Elimination Plan (PAHO 2024).
- Formulation of the National Disease Elimination Plan 2025-2026, including funding sources, among other elements.
- Promote and support national efforts to establish and operate the National Technical Advisory Committee of the National Elimination Plan.

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