Health and Migration in the Americas: PAHO/WHO Technical Cooperation

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Migration has been a part of the experience of countries in the Region of the Americas at various moments throughout their history, as countries of origin, transit, destination or return.

Adverse drivers and structural issues (e.g., social and political conflict, violence, adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation) have given rise to evolving dynamics in migration within the Region, including:

- Large-scale population movements in a short timeframe
- Alterations in traditional migrant profiles
- Diversification of destination countries (e.g., Caribbean islands)

As of October 2019, LAC hosted 3.7 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants (Colombia, Peru, Chile and Ecuador top 4 hosting countries) (Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform, 2019)

Approximately 460,000 Central American migrants entered Mexico during the first half of 2019 (National Mexican Institute on Migration, 2019)

Between 2016 and 2018, Mexico registered the highest number of returnees to the NTCA. Between January and April 2019, the trend switched with more migrants returning from the U.S. (IOM, 2019)
BRIEF OVERVIEW: REGIONAL TRENDS

SEGÚN MÉDICOS SIN FRONTERAS

Incertidumbre para migrantes deriva en problemas físicos y mentales

Por: Diario La Hora - 17 de octubre de 2019

Nueva caravana de migrantes partirá a EEUU desde el sur de México

06 Oct 2019 / 22:43 PM /
Más de 2,000 migrantes africanos varados en Chiapas saldrán en caravana hacia EEUU este viernes.

Estados Unidos empezará a enviar esta semana a solicitantes de asilo a Guatemala

Washington anunció US$4,7 millones para implementar el acuerdo migratorio.

Por: Irving Escobar - 28 de octubre de 2019 a las 12:54h

Gobierno intensificará búsqueda de recursos externos para atender a refugiados

Carlos Alvarado adelantó la gestión luego de que la vicepresidenta Epsy Campbell afirmara que los flujos migratorios son una “carga pesada” para Costa Rica

Por: Jessal Branco - 21 de octubre
Lacking or having limited access to adequate sanitation, shelter, safe food, clean water; exposure to unsafe working conditions and environments; risks of different forms of violence, abuse and trafficking

Barriers to accessing health services throughout their migration path and in host communities, for example, language and cultural differences, stigma and discrimination, inability to affiliate to local financing schemes, unawareness of legal entitlements and how health care is delivered

Interruptions and/or delays in treatment, misuse of medications, and lack of adequate follow-up and continuity of care

This increases the risks of developing or worsening communicable and non-communicable diseases, including mental health and substance abuse disorders
Institutions and health systems challenged by increased demand of health services and lack of access

- Financial burden placed on the health sector and challenges in mobilizing additional public funding
- Weaknesses of national surveillance systems, and in managing and monitoring information
- Limited human resources and capacities; challenges in mobilizing them
- Stress and burnout in health care workers
KEY MANDATES AND FRAMEWORKS

WHA61.17
Health of Migrants

CD53.R14
Strategy for Universal Access to Health and Universal Health Coverage

CD55.R13
Health of Migrants

WHO Framework
of Priorities and Guiding Principles to Promote the Health of Refugees and Migrants

WHO Draft Global Action Plan
to Promote the Health of Refugees and Migrants

WHA70.15
Promoting the Health of Refugees and Migrants

2008

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Global Compact on Refugees and Migrants

The Global Compact on Refugees

UHC Political Declaration
RESOLUTION CD55.R13 HEALTH OF MIGRANTS (2016)

- Generate health policies and programs to **address health inequities that affect migrants**
- Lead the effort to modify or improve **regulatory and legal frameworks in order to address specific health needs** of migrants and their families
- Advance towards providing migrants with access to the same level of **financial protection and of comprehensive, quality, and progressively expanded health services** that other people living in the same country enjoy, regardless of migratory status
- Promote action at the bilateral, multilateral, national, and local levels to generate **proposals for the coordination and articulation of programs and policies on health issues** of common interest in border areas
PAHO/WHO convened Ministers of Health and Health Authorities from 25 countries and territories across the Region of the Americas and representatives from United Nations Agencies.

Identified 5 strategic lines and priority actions to improve countries’ health systems and services for both the migrant and host populations and address key challenges.

As a commitment established at the meeting, in April 2019 PAHO/WHO published a Guidance Document on Migration and Health.

1. Strengthen health surveillance, information management and monitoring

2. Improve access to health services for the migrant and host population

3. Improve communication and exchange of information to counter xenophobia, stigma, and discrimination

4. Strengthen partnerships, networks, and multi-country frameworks to promote and protect the health and well-being of migrants

5. Adapt policies, programs, and legal frameworks to promote and protect the health and well-being of migrants
GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO PROMOTE THE HEALTH OF MIGRANTS

- Right to health
- Equality and non-discrimination
- Health systems that address the health needs of all, including those of the migrant population
- Access to equitable health services that are people-centered
- Multi-sectoral approach
Resolution on Universal Health (CD53.R14, 2014): Lead efforts to include migrants in the regional movement toward Universal Health

Adoption of political declaration on UHC – High-level Meeting on UHC | September 2019

- Address particular needs and vulnerabilities of migrants, including mental health and counselling services
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PAHO TECHNICAL COOPERATION ON HEALTH AND MIGRATION

➢ Working with Member States to ensure that emergency-affected populations have access to an essential package of life-saving health services

➢ Establishing comprehensive incident management systems and coordinating the action of health emergency partners on the ground

➢ Supporting and managing local health and migration working groups to coordinate actions

➢ Participating in inter-agency coordination and in actions on health and migration led under Health Clusters

➢ Assisting Member States in developing health contingency plans and identifying and analyzing potential risks and vulnerabilities
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PAHO TECHNICAL COOPERATION ON HEALTH AND MIGRATION

➢ Advocating for the increase of vaccine coverage and supporting Member States in national immunization campaigns

➢ Providing laboratory equipment, reagents and supplies to selected national and subnational laboratories

➢ Development of daily summary of events that have (or could have) international public health implications in, or related to, the Region of the Americas

➢ Development of monthly epidemiological updates

➢ Strengthening the capacities of Member States in epidemiological surveillance and information management and reporting within the framework of the IHR and in psychosocial and mental health support offered to migrants
Establish an alignment with all existing strategies for greater policy coherence and synergy, avoid duplication, accelerate efforts in the Region, and coordinate concrete actions to improve access to health services at all stages of migration.

Promote and support countries to identify and integrate the health needs of migrants in health policies, plans, programs, and legal frameworks.

Promote the development of bilateral and multilateral plans that address public health challenges within the migration context.

Support efforts to strengthen health systems with the aim of transcending the short-term response.

Strengthen the involvement of the health sector in the planning and implementation of migration-related plans, strategies and programs.