

Impact of COVID-19 on human resources for health and policy response:

the case of Plurinational State of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru




Overview of findings from
five Latin American countries

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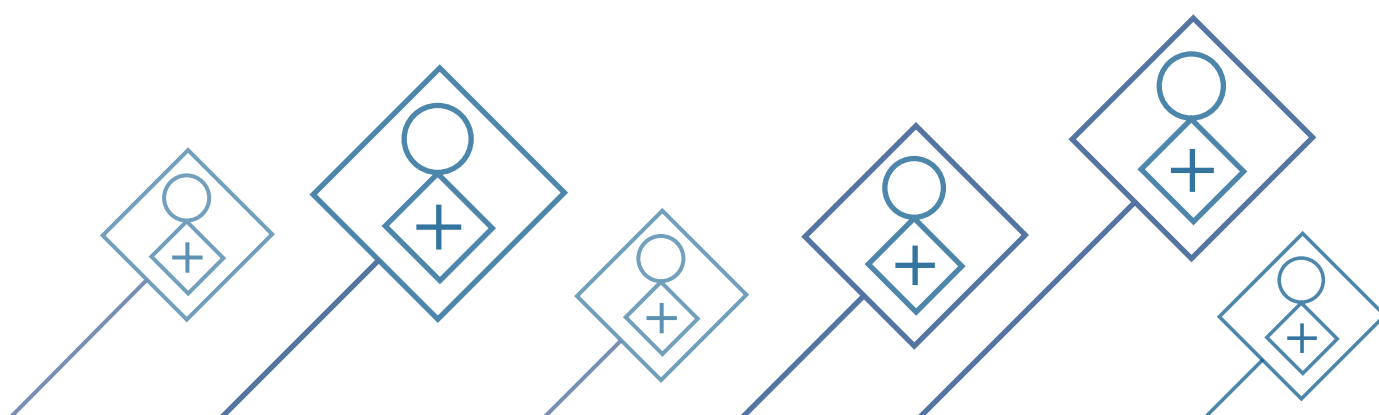
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Contents

Foreword	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Abbreviations	vi
Executive summary.....	vii
1. Introduction	1
2. Country context	3
3. Methods and data sources	5
4. Impact of COVID-19 on human resources for health	7
5. Policy response	15
5.1 General strategy	16
5.2 Improving health workforce availability	17
5.2.1 Identifying COVID-19 workforce needs	17
5.2.2 Measures to maintain or increase human resources for health	20
5.3 Measures to protect and support human resources for health	25
5.3.1 Health and safety at work and infection prevention and control	25
5.3.2 Training	27
5.3.3 Vaccination	27
5.4 Financing	28
6. Discussion on strengths and challenges	31
7. Discussion of results	33
References	37

Tables

Table 1. Density of doctors and nursing professionals per 10 000 population	4
Table 2. Impact of COVID-19 on human resources for health	10
Table 3. Funding for additional human resources for health	29
Table 4. Strategies and mechanisms to address HRH in the response to COVID-19 in the five countries studied	34



Foreword

Act together to protect and invest in health workers

Health workers represent one of the main pillars of resilient health systems and have been fundamental in the response to COVID-19. The pandemic, in addition to highlighting the shortage of health workers, has revealed the importance of adequate information systems, and the need to promote measures to protect health workers, and to encourage and ensure decent work.

In the International Year of Health and Care Workers (2021) and in an effort to support countries in the design and implementation of strategies to address health workers' problems during COVID-19, the World Health Organization (WHO) Department of Health Workforce together with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Subregional Programme for South America have supported the development and analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on health workers and the policy responses via a number of country case studies. This study provides a standardized methodology and measurement indicators to identify, analyse and quantify the multifaceted impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on human resources for health (HRH). In particular, the impacts on the working conditions of health workers, their availability and distribution in the country, their mental health, risk of infection and social welfare, have all been assessed.

The value of this study is multifaceted and has benefited from the participation of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, which are part of PAHO's South American Subregion, the Andean Health Organization and the Organization of American States. The process of conducting the analysis has enhanced countries' capacities in identifying and analysing the health workforce challenges. The resulting data and information provide new insights for policy dialogue at national level, intercountry analysis, and to inform policy action and enable coordination – producing a common good for health across the region. Further, the study contributes to the global perspective by informing WHO public goods and interim guidance documents on the COVID-19 response.

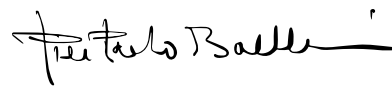
This study offers a systematization of the policies and strategies adopted by the participating countries to face the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic on HRH. The information and lessons learned contribute to provide evidence and align policy priorities and objectives around the protection and care of the health workforce of the entire region, and highlight the need to improve investment in HRH as a priority strategy to strengthen resilience of health systems, ensuring continuity, optimal functioning, access and adequate coverage to the whole population.



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Abbreviations

HIS	health information systems
HRH	human resources for health
HRIS	human resources information system
HWF	health workforce
IADB	Interamerican Development Bank
INEC	National Institute for Statistics and Censuses of Ecuador
INS	National Institute of Health of Colombia
IPC	infection prevention and control
MEF Peru	Ministry of Economy and Finance of Peru
MoH	ministry of health
MoH Bolivia	Ministry of Health and Sports of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
MoH Chile	Ministry of Health of Chile
MoH Ecuador	Ministry of Public Health of Ecuador
MoH Colombia	Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Colombia
MoH Peru	Ministry of Health of Peru
NHWA	National Health Workforce Account
NVP	national vaccination plan
OAS	Organization of American States
ORAS-CONHU	Andean Health Organization
ORHUS	Human Resources for Health Observatory, MoH Peru
OTHS	Observatory for Human Talent in Health, MoH Colombia
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PoR	presidency of the republic
PoR Colombia	Presidency of the Republic of Colombia
PoR Ecuador	Constitutional Presidency of Ecuador

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