

# Highlights from the Evaluation of PAHO's Technical Cooperation in Health Workforce in the Americas

The health workforce is a fundamental component of resilient health systems and a prerequisite for achieving universal access to health and universal health coverage. Strengthening the availability, distribution, competencies, and performance of the health workforce remains a priority for Member States across the Americas.

PAHO commissioned the evaluation of its technical cooperation in health workforce (HWF) in the corporate evaluation workplan to provide an independent assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of its support to Member States.

The evaluation covered PAHO's technical cooperation from 2018 to 2024 at regional, subregional, and country levels. It examined PAHO's contribution to strengthening workforce governance, planning, education, regulation, migration, and emergency preparedness.

The findings and recommendations are intended to support accountability, organizational learning, and future strategic directions for health workforce development in the Region.

## Key Findings and Conclusions

### **1. PAHO's technical cooperation on health workforce is highly relevant and valued by Member States**

PAHO is widely recognized as a trusted partner in health workforce development. Its technical cooperation is strongly aligned with Member States' priorities and has contributed to workforce planning, policy development, governance strengthening, and capacity building. PAHO's comparative advantages include its technical expertise, convening power, regional reach, and ability to facilitate policy dialogue across countries.

### **2. PAHO is highly valued for diagnostics, planning, and policy development, while countries highlighted the need for stronger support for implementation and follow-up.**

The evaluation found that PAHO's technical cooperation has been particularly effective in generating evidence, conducting workforce assessments, strengthening workforce planning, supporting policy development, and building capacities. Digital learning platforms, particularly the [Virtual Campus for Public Health](#), were consistently recognized as valuable tools for expanding access to training and strengthening workforce competencies across the Region. However, countries increasingly require support that goes beyond diagnostics and

planning, and helps translate policies into implementation and sustained results. This represents one of the most important findings of the evaluation.

### **3. Stronger governance, workforce intelligence, and planning systems are essential for sustainable progress**

Significant advances have been made in workforce planning and information systems. Nevertheless, persistent challenges remain in workforce distribution, retention, labor market monitoring, and workforce projections. Sustainable progress requires stronger governance arrangements, improved workforce intelligence systems, and institutional mechanisms capable of supporting long-term planning across political cycles.

### **4. Regional cooperation is increasingly critical for addressing shared workforce challenges**

The evaluation highlights health workforce migration as a growing challenge that cannot be effectively addressed through isolated country actions. Migration pressures, particularly in the Caribbean but increasingly elsewhere in the Region, require coordinated regional responses. The evaluation also underscores the value of

regional collaboration in education, training, emergency preparedness, and knowledge exchange.

### **5. Countries have high expectations for continued and expanded PAHO technical cooperation in health workforce**

Member States consistently expressed strong

demand for technical cooperation in health workforce. While investment in this area has increased, available resources remain insufficient to fully respond to country needs. This creates a need for greater prioritization and efficiency in the delivery of technical cooperation while maintaining PAHO's support to strategic regional priorities.

## **Recommendations**

**1. Progressively strengthen support to Member States in implementing, institutionalizing, and monitoring health workforce policies and interventions** while maintaining its comparative advantage in diagnostics, planning, and policy development. .

**2. Strengthen national and regional health workforce governance and planning systems** through improved labor market intelligence, workforce projections, career pathway frameworks, retention strategies, and multisectoral governance arrangements.

**3. Strengthen technical cooperation in health workforce training, professional education and lifelong learning**, incorporating an interprofessional approach and collaborative practice in partnership with academic institutions, collaborating centers, professional associations, and other strategic partners.

**4. Strengthen regional cooperation to address health workforce migration**, support evidence-informed policy dialogue, and promote ethical recruitment practices, and regional collaboration mechanisms to address workforce mobility challenges and their impact on health systems.

**5. Support Member States in integrating health workforce planning, training, and surge-capacity mechanisms** into national and regional emergency preparedness and response systems.

The evaluation was conducted between September 2025 and June 2026 by an external independent team using a mixed-method, theory-based approach. Data collection included a documentary review, an online survey completed by 42 respondents from 24 countries (69% of Member States), and 49 stakeholder interviews across eight countries.

Stakeholders included Ministries of Health, PAHO personnel, academia, international and subregional organizations, civil society organizations, and development partners. In-depth case studies and site visits were conducted in Brazil, Guatemala, and Guyana.

Findings were triangulated across surveys, interviews, documents, statistics, site visits, and case studies. The evaluation also applied cross-cutting lenses of gender, equity, interculturality, disability, and human rights.

## **Contact**

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