

DEVELOPMENT IN TRANSITION

Dialogues to chart new paths for
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



PANDEMICS AND THE ROLE OF PRIMARY HEALTH CARE (PHC)

07 JULY 2021

16h  | 9h  | 10h  | 11h 

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Fostering new development models: A multidimensional
approach to the post-Covid-19 world.

The COVID-19 crisis has hit Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) harder than any other emerging region in the world. In economic terms, the region has suffered a 7.7% drop in GDP, and in human terms, over a million lives have been lost. With around 60% of informal workers and 40% of all workers in the region surviving without any form social safety net before the pandemic hit, the most vulnerable members of society are bearing the brunt of the crisis today.

Furthermore, a series of pre-existing development traps, outlined in the Latin American Economic Outlook 2019, have accentuated the toll of the crisis in the region. As LAC countries chart the path to recovery, development models need to evolve to break the vicious cycles that held the region back even before the crisis struck. We have also seen that national responses alone are not enough to overcome a crisis of global scale; new international partnerships and international co-operation on an equal footing are essential to ensuring a long-term recovery for the region.

At this critical juncture for Latin America and the Caribbean, the EU Regional Facility on Development in Transition is engaged in a series of efforts under “Fostering sustainable development models in LAC countries: A multidimensional approach to the post-COVID-19 world”. Partners including the OECD and its Development Centre and the European Commission (INTPA) have joined forces with key regional institutions, including the Pan-American Health Organization and ECLAC, to contribute, through analysis and debate, to shaping new development models for a sustainable and inclusive recovery in LAC.

The “**Development in Transition Days**” will be a first milestone in this effort. A series of discussions will help assess the policy priorities for LAC in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis, especially in the fields of regional integration and global value chains; social protection systems; gender; primary healthcare, and regional and international partnerships. Latin American and European economic and political leaders will take part of the discussion for paving the way of the recovery. There will also be a focus on the specific cases of key countries in the region: Brazil, Panama and Paraguay.

Through these discussions, the EU Facility on Development in Transition aims to take stock of the valuable assessments, experiences and ideas that can help regional and European actors to jointly determine the post-COVID strategic priorities and line of action for a sustainable and inclusive recovery, beyond just the recovery phase. An endeavour that will also contribute to strengthening the longstanding partnership between both LAC and Europe towards the common goal of improving people’s well-being.



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As part of the unfinished development transition, the limited capacity of health systems in most LAC countries amplify the challenge of fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. Given its proximity to the community and role as the first point of contact for most people with the health system, strong primary health care can address the majority of health needs of the population, and can play a key role in responding resiliently to health shocks like the COVID-19 pandemic. Strong primary health care can substantially reduce pressure on health systems, through prevention, detection, and monitoring for early signs of an outbreak, treatment to less complex cases, and continuity of care for other health needs.

However, despite a number of primary health care best practice examples in some EU and LAC countries, there is mounting evidence and experience showing that primary health care was ill-prepared to deal with such a health shock, and faced challenges in maximising its potential during the crisis. The pandemic offers huge opportunities to learn lessons for health system resilience. Being better prepared to face future health emergencies require the right investments and the right policy reforms towards expanding primary health care.

This expert meeting will seek to answer to the following questions:

- **Which are the most relevant actions and policies that primary health care (PHC) in selected EU and LAC countries have developed:**
 - 1) monitoring and containing the spread of the pandemic?
 - 2) addressing COVID-19 symptoms proactively?
 - 3) maintaining routine care during the pandemic?
- **How can we promote collaboration between European and LAC countries to foster policy improvements on PHC to be better prepared for future systemic shocks in the health sector?**



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Moderator:

- Jose Antonio Ardavin, Head of the Latin American and Caribbean Division, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD

Opening:

- Mark Pearson, Deputy Director of the Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Directorate, OECD
- John Ryan, Deputy Director General for Health, Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, European Commission.
- Paul Zubeil, Deputy Director-General, European and International Health Politics, German Federal Ministry of Health

Setting the scene for primary care and essential public health functions post-pandemic:

- Amalia Del Riego, Chief of the Health Services and Access Unit, Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)
- Caroline Berchet, Economist, Health Division, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Directorate, OECD

Panellists:

- Containing the spread of the pandemic
 - Spain: Sergio Minue, Academic coordinator of the specialisation in Health Services Management, Andalusian School of Public Health: *Primary care, tracking and tracing COVID cases*
 - Chile: María Soledad Martínez Gutiérrez, Assistant Professor, University of Chile: *Primary care as a platform for deployment of vaccination*
- Providing care for COVID-19 patients in the community
 - Italy: Milena Vainieri, Associate Professor, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa: *COVID-19 Special Units of Primary Care*
 - Costa Rica: José Fábio Quesada Córdoba, Costa Rican Social Security Fund: *Deployment of Community Health Professionals*
- Maintaining continuity of care during the pandemic
 - Colombia: Germán Escobar, Chief of Cabinet, Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Colombia: *Digital technology, telehealth and teleconsultation*

Key Takeaways and next steps:

- Frederico Guanais, Deputy Head of the Health Division, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Directorate, OECD
- Bernd Appelt, Senior Official of International Aid / Cooperation for the Health Sector; EU, DG INTPA, .G.4 Social Inclusion and Protection, Health and Demography, European Commission.

Simultaneous interpretation between English and Spanish will be available



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Contact points

OECD - GRS

Ms. Sofia Blamey Andrusco

e-mail: sofia.blameyandrusco@oecd.org

Telephone: +33 7 83 85 42 58

OECD - GRS

Mr. José Antonio Ardavin

e-mail : Jose-Antonio.ARDAVIN@oecd.org

Telephone: +33 1 45 24 17 83

