

The banner features the PAHO logo in large white letters on a blue background. Below it are the logos for the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization Americas Region. To the right, the words 'News Release' are written in white on a dark blue background with a vertical orange line to its left. The background of the banner has a blue and orange geometric pattern.

# PAHO



Pan American  
Health  
Organization



World Health  
Organization  
Americas Region

## News Release

## PAHO's 2024 annual report details health security achievements in the Americas

**Washington, D.C., 15 May 2025 (PAHO)** – The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) released its [2024 annual report](#) documenting its work to strengthen health security across the Americas amid infectious disease outbreaks, the Region's heavy reliance on imported vaccines and pharmaceuticals, and persistent systemic inequities.

Throughout the year, PAHO served 1 billion people across 35 Member States and marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pan American Sanitary Code—the first multilateral agreement to coordinate disease control across borders. The Organization also advanced health security through enhanced surveillance, expanded primary health care, and increased vaccine production.

“The Pan American Sanitary Code shows our irrevocable commitment to improving the health of all in the Region of the Americas, regardless of their economic status or geography,” said Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, PAHO Director. “Health care faces new challenges that require a renewed spirit of cooperation.”

The [2024 Annual Report: Advancing Health for Regional Security](#) provides a comprehensive account of these efforts. A dengue outbreak reached 13 million cases—nearly triple 2023's total—with over 7,700 deaths, primarily in Brazil, and limited transmission in U.S. states. Avian influenza (H5N1) recorded 66 human cases in the U.S. and 1 in Canada, and over 1,300 animal outbreaks region-wide, while Oropouche virus spread across 12 countries.

PAHO's key actions included establishing the Commission for the Prevention and Control of Zoonotic Influenza, leveraging its 24/7 surveillance system, and providing direct support to countries facing

outbreaks. By analyzing data from social media, health authorities, and the media, PAHO issued six dengue alerts and updates, and monitored avian flu risks, sharing real-time updates to enable swift responses. This coordination ensured Member States could act to protect public health and contain cross-border threats. PAHO also supported supply management and trained health personnel across the Americas.

## **Strengthening regional health systems**

The report details how PAHO strengthened health systems through key initiatives, including the Alliance for Primary Health Care in the Americas, a collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and World Bank. This initiative is working across 10 countries to expand primary health care (PHC), which can address up to 80% of health needs, enabling more equitable and responsive systems for routine care and emergencies.

In Guatemala, PAHO supported a 15% increase in PHC coverage. In Chile, the health workforce was expanded by 16,000 personnel. Meanwhile, 17 countries are advancing their health security and public health capacities through PAHO's Essential Public Health Functions initiative.

In parallel, PAHO advanced its Better Care for Noncommunicable Diseases initiative, working to expand access to care for cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. The HEARTS initiative now reaches 33 countries, treating 5.7 million people with hypertension. A Task Force on maternal mortality, launched in 2024, is focusing on 12 countries that account for 90% of maternal deaths in the Region.

The Disease Elimination Initiative made notable progress: Belize, Jamaica, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis, and Brazil eliminated lymphatic filariasis as a public health problem. PAHO's Regional Revolving Funds facilitated access to 224 million vaccine doses and delivered 5 million treatments, reinforcing immunization programs and overall public health capacity.

The *Strategy on Epidemic Intelligence (2024–2029)* — the first of its kind globally — strengthened early warning systems. Meanwhile, digital transformation in the health sector, backed by over \$900 million in loans from the IDB, reached 20 countries.

“In 2024, we launched powerful initiatives not only to detect and treat

disease, but to transform the health systems,” said Dr. Barbosa. “This is about building resilience so that our health systems don’t just survive the next crisis— they are better prepared to respond.”

## **Enhancing self-sufficiency**

The report highlights efforts to reduce the Region’s reliance on imported pharmaceuticals, including support for mRNA vaccine development in Argentina and Brazil, such as a vaccine targeting H5N1 avian influenza. Today, Latin America and the Caribbean import six times more pharmaceuticals and 80 times more vaccines than they export.

PAHO’s Innovation and Regional Production Platform, launched in 2023, drove key projects in 2024, including technical assistance to nine Member States and manufacturers, a mapping of vaccine production capacity, and an analysis of technology transfer efforts. The PAHO Revolving Funds also introduced greater flexibilities to promote local production, brokering partnerships with manufacturers such as Pfizer and Argentina’s Sinergium Biotech.

“COVID-19 revealed how vulnerable we were,” said Dr. Barbosa. “That lesson is now driving innovation, encouraging public-private partnerships to build vaccine and medicine production in our own Region — boosting both self-sufficiency and health security.”

## **Uniting the Region for health**

PAHO also continued a wide-ranging institutional reform to improve cost-effectiveness and strengthen collaboration with multilateral institutions, the private sector, and civil society. The PAHO Forward Plan 2.0, launched in December 2024, aims to enhance transparency and efficiency.

Beyond operations, PAHO served as a neutral platform for countries during the Pandemic Accord negotiations, convening 21 meetings with ministers of health and foreign affairs, and diplomats to promote a coordinated regional voice in global health policy.

## **2024 milestones and looking ahead**

Despite a complex public health landscape, PAHO remains a vital force for advancing health in the Americas. Among the highlights:

- Vaccination coverage surpassed pre-pandemic levels for the first time.
- The Region of the Americas regained measles-free status after a 2018 setback.
- With PAHO's support, Latin American and Caribbean countries secured \$84 million in pandemic preparedness financing through the Pandemic Fund.

"Health security is an ongoing commitment," concluded Dr. Barbosa. "Through innovation, coordination, and solidarity, PAHO remains the keystone in safeguarding health and expanding access for every person in the Americas."

## Links

[PAHO Annual Report 2024: Advancing health for regional security](#)

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The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) works with the countries of the Americas to improve the health and quality of life of its population. Founded in 1902, it is the world's oldest international public health agency. It serves as the Regional Office of WHO for the Americas and is the specialized health agency of the Inter-American system (OAS).