

# MHPSS Bulletin | Migration and Health Program

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Actions – MHPSS for Venezuelan nationals, Colombian returnees and host communities.



## During the second half of 2021 with MHPSS we strengthened communities and institutions

In this issue:

- MHPSS results second semester 2021.
- Socialization of the MHPSS handbook.
- Successful experiences in promoting social cohesion and mental health.
- #Actívate Strategy.



## MHPSS Results:

48.659



People attended workshops on mental health care and the promotion of social cohesion.

344



Male and female leaders from **17** Community Health Networks<sup>1</sup> strengthened by the #Activate strategy.

1.913



People assisted by psychological services and mental health diagnoses in local hospitals.

20.586



People received individual psychological counseling from the program mental health professionals.

4.318



Health and non-health professionals strengthened their capacity in MHPSS.

565

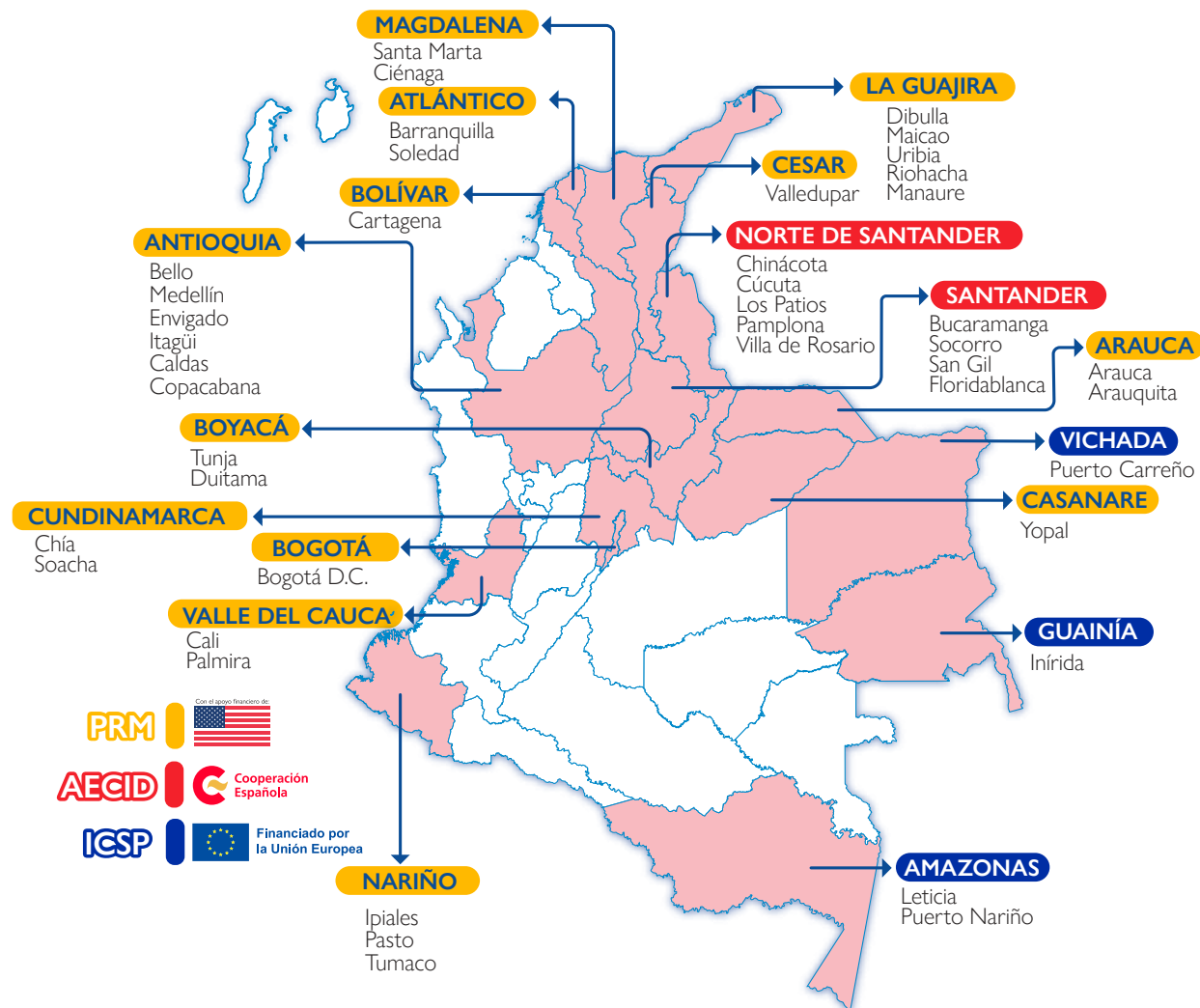


People benefited from mental health care provided by clinical psychology, psychiatry, and neurology services.

## Second semester 2021

We have continued to strengthen protective factors for the psychosocial well-being of the population at the individual, family, and community levels in:

**40 municipalities of the 17 departamentos**



<sup>1</sup> The formation of Community Health Networks is a strategy implemented by the IOM Migration and Health Program since 2019. It involves Venezuelan migrants and refugees and Colombian male and female leaders who promote health in their communities.

## Institutional capacity strengthening for MHPSS

### Launch and dissemination of the 'Handbook on Community-based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Emergencies and Displacement'






The Handbook was developed by the Mental Health, Psychosocial Response and Intercultural Communication Unit of IOM Geneva. It is a 16-chapter publication with several supplementary resources that provides guidance for the design, implementation, and evaluation of MHPSS programs, projects, and activities.

In the departments of Valle del Cauca, Bolivar, Vichada, Santander, Arauca, Nariño, and Norte de Santander, we held workshops to share the handbook with mental health teams in the Health Secretariats and other

allied partners to strengthen coordinated work on MHPSS and support the implementation of public policies on mental health, including refugee and migrant populations. 212 people participated in this activity.

These activities made it possible to:

-  Reflect and dialog with the different territorial actors on psychosocial work and mental health care with populations exposed to adverse circumstances.
-  Make visible the MHPSS needs of refugees and migrants and explore alternatives to improve their approach.
-  Strengthen strategic alliances for the development of MHPSS actions, creating a network of services and referrals that improve access for migrants and host communities.



Cali | October 2nd and 3rd.



Cartagena | October 15th.



Bucaramanga | October 28th and 29th.



Pasto | November 11th and 12th.



Arauca | December 1st and 2nd.



Vichada | October 20th and 21st.



Cúcuta | November 17th and 18th.



## Community strengthening for promoting mental health and social cohesion



Women participating in activities during the workshop. Antioquia. 2021.

### 📍 Bello and Caldas (Antioquia) | Telarte: knitting and writing experiences

75 Venezuelan and Colombian women survivors of violence participated in the workshops "Telarte: knitting and writing experiences". This activity promoted the recognition and elaboration of significant experiences related to sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, and self-care through artistic and verbal languages.

The plastic arts (looms, weaving, and clay molds), as well as music, theater and reading, allowed participants to identify their thoughts and feelings about the issues addressed, which facilitated a process of self-analysis and self-knowledge of their rights.

### 📍 Guainía (Inírida) | “We play for mental health”

261 people from 8 indigenous communities of the Puinave, Curripaco and Sikuani peoples participated in the strategy 'Nos la jugamos por la salud mental' (We play for mental health); an action that prevents xenophobia and promotes integration and social cohesion between refugees and migrants and host communities through sports.

The strategy, designed together with the leaders of the Community Health Network 'United for a Better Tomorrow,' provided opportunities to raise awareness about the importance of physical activity, developing strategies for collective care, the healthy use of leisure time, and improving interpersonal relationships.



Venezuelan and Colombian young people integrate and socialize through sports. Inírida. 2021.



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## Community strengthening for promoting mental health and social cohesion



### #ACTÍVATE strategy to promote regularization, affiliation to the Health System and vaccination

#Actívate is an information, education, and communication (IEC) strategy with a psychosocial approach that promotes the process of regularization of migration status, affiliation to the health system, and vaccination-regular and against COVID -19 - among Venezuelan and Colombian nationals in 20 municipalities in 17 departments of Colombia.

This strategy gave 344 Community Health Network leaders access to communication tools and techniques that enabled them to formulate key health messages and propose strategies for their dissemination. In this way, they were able to counteract myths and fake news about regularization, affiliation and vaccination in their communities.

In addition, this strategy strengthened the coordination of actions between communities and institutions at the territorial level.

### 📍 Soledad (Atlántico) | "We all matter" strategy

Leaders of the Community Health Network 'United Without Borders' developed the "We All Matter" initiative, an action that spreads key messages about health services, health pathways and mental health through musical pieces, loudspeaker actions, and other means, targeting Venezuelan and Colombian nationals settled in the neighborhoods of Villa Severa, Urbanización El Parque, Prado Soledad Etapa 4, San Vicente and 12 de Octubre.

This action was possible thanks to the capacity building received by leaders through the #Activate training process, with support from the Office of the Ombudsman, the Department of Social Coexistence and Mental Health of the Office of Public Health, the Affiliation Office of the Secretary of Health, and the Expanded Program for Immunization (PAI).

One of the main achievements was the vaccination against COVID-19 of 1,062 Venezuelan and Colombian pregnant women.



## Community strengthening for promoting mental health and social cohesion

### 📍 Bucaramanga (Santander) | Santander active



Mental health promotion in the framework of the #Actívate strategy. Santander. 2021.



91 pregnant Venezuelan women living in the neighborhoods of Bavaria II, Café Madrid, Campo Madrid, Parque de las Cigarras, and Antonia Santos in the municipality of Bucaramanga received the vaccine against COVID -19 after participating in one of the days held in this territory as part of the #Actívate strategy.



The leaders of the Community Health Network 'Hands that Save' developed key messages to promote regularization, inclusion in the health system and vaccination in their communities, which were disseminated through visual pieces and radio spots developed by themselves.

Among the communicative pieces, the following stand out: a decalogue about the points to consider in regularization, a radio spot about the assistance hotline for the affiliation and insurance process, illustrations about the importance of the regular vaccination schedule and COVID -19; and an informative poster with keys to mental health care.

Members of the Network strengthened their capacity through the #Actívate training process and the active participation of the territorial entities.

## MHPSS Achievements

-  1 The institutional capacities of strategic allies in the territories were strengthened through the socialization of the MHPSS Handbook, enabling them to optimize the comprehensive response to the MHPSS needs of migrant populations and host communities.
-  2 Community-based MHPSS actions were implemented with a differential approach based on a timely response to the needs related to the migration phenomenon and the pandemic COVID-19.

-  3 The actions guaranteed timely access to specialized mental health services for people not affiliated to the health system, reducing their suffering and that of their families, improving their quality of life, and mitigating the risk of psychosocial complications.
-  4 The #Actívate strategy reached communities with key messages on regularization, affiliation and vaccination. This was possible thanks to the protagonist, creativity, and commitment of male and female leaders, who were trained and strengthened their capacity on these topics.



## SMAPS en fechas conmemorativas

Actions to prevent and promote mental health and psychosocial well-being reached refugees, migrants, and host communities on dates and commemorative days important for health management.



Maicao, La Guajira | World Suicide Prevention Day.



Valledupar, Cesar | World Mental Health Day.



Santa Marta, Magdalena The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.



Vichada | World AIDS Day.



Bogotá | Human Rights Day.



Norte de Santander | International Migrants Day.



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