



# MHPSS Bulletin

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Actions -  
MHPSS for Venezuelan and Colombian Nationals  
Second Semester 2022



# VIVIR SEGURAS



Workshop "Weaving Hope" in commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism. Arauca, Arauca. © IOM 2022

## Introduction

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) continued implementing the community-based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Strategy across 18 departments in Colombia throughout the second half of 2022.

In this MHPSS bulletin edition, we highlight some community actions related to suicide prevention, mental health promotion, and the elimination of violence against women, under the framework of three international commemorations related to these topics. We also highlight the Organisation's participation in national and international events related to mental health. Furthermore, under the framework of the response to mixed migration flows in Necoclí, we share the experience of implementing a care strategy to support humanitarian personnel in that territory.

These actions were possible thanks to the financial support of the US State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) in Colombia.



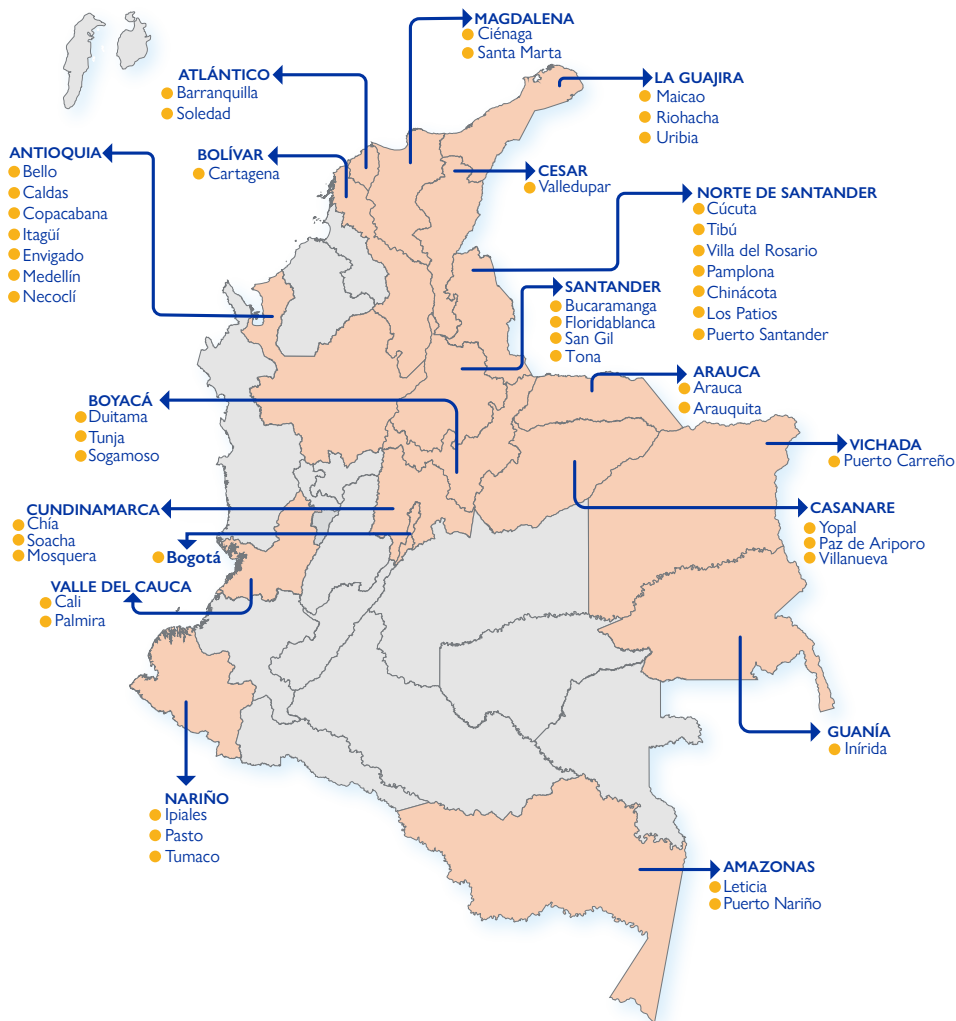


Workshop on the prevention of violence against women. Yopal, Casanare. © IOM 2022

Under the framework of the [International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women](#), commemorated on November 25, we assisted the Community Health Network 'Unidos Somos Más' from Yopal, Casanare, with the workshop "You are not alone, report, We are free!" A space that promotes actions to prevent and mitigate gender-based violence within their communities.

# Our coverage is growing!

We strengthen protective factors for the psychosocial well-being of Venezuelan and Colombian national population at the individual, family, and community levels across **48 municipalities in 18 departments.**





Painting under the framework of the 'Emotional landscape' workshop, Bogotá © IOM 2022

## MHPSS Results from January to December 2022

69,747



People participated in workshops on mental health care and promotion of coexistence.

5,662



Health and other practitioners strengthened their MHPSS capacities.

1,018



People received specialised mental health care through clinical psychology, psychiatry, and neurology services.

1,790



People participated in responsible parenthood courses.

**1,703** **87**  
Women Men

2,274



Individuals received individual psychosocial support from IOM psychosocial practitioners.

13,955



People received psychological assistance at local IOM partner hospitals





Rally under the framework of the 16 Days of Activism. Duitama, Boyacá. © IOM 2022

In coordination with municipal health authorities and other partners, together with the Community Health Network 'Parche sin Fronteras' from Duitama, Boyacá, we developed social mobilisation actions that sought to raise awareness on the need to end violence against women. To this end, more than 250 women walked through the municipality's main roads displaying key prevention messages.

## Community MHPSS Experiences

Under the framework of international commemorations related to mental health and psychosocial well-being, IOM assists communities with several activities.

### 📍 National | Community health network care meetings, end of 2022

With the purpose of creating spaces for mental health care and the personal acknowledgement of 620 female and male leaders from 26 Community Health Networks, 20 events were held in their territories in December 2022 under the framework of the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support strategy implemented by the IOM.

In outdoor spaces, leaders bonded with nature and their environment. In addition, they took stock of each network's achievements in terms of their communities' health care. They also planned for key actions in 2023, including the promotion of mental health and psychosocial well-being.

They also acknowledged individual and collective strengths and their progressive growth as a support network, positively impacting integration and coexistence for refugees, migrants, and host communities.



Activity with 'Rompiendo Fronteras' Community Health Network leaders. Cartagena, Bolívar. © IOM 2022

### 📍 Bogota | Community health network strengthened in suicide prevention



Suicide prevention event. Bogotá. © IOM 2022

Under the framework of the **World Suicide Prevention Day**, commemorated on September 10, 373 Venezuelan and Colombian nationals participated in awareness-raising activities conducted by the 'Construyendo Sueños' Community Health Network on topics related to the elimination of stigma and the promotion of care pathways to address suicide. This effective action was possible because of the capacity building the IOM provided to this network.

We trained female and male leaders in psychological first aid, identifying warning signs and risk factors, and activating pathways and support available within the territory.

This is how we promote the participation of refugees, migrants, and host communities as actors in case notification and activating assistance processes. In addition, they replicate lessons learned throughout their territories.





Artistic activity under the framework of the 'Enjoy Your Life' strategy. Tumaco, Nariño. © IOM 2022

The strategy highlights the Community Health Network's and the territory's youth work, who use music as a tool for health promotion and self-care practices.

## Tumaco | Enjoy Your Life, a suicide prevention experience

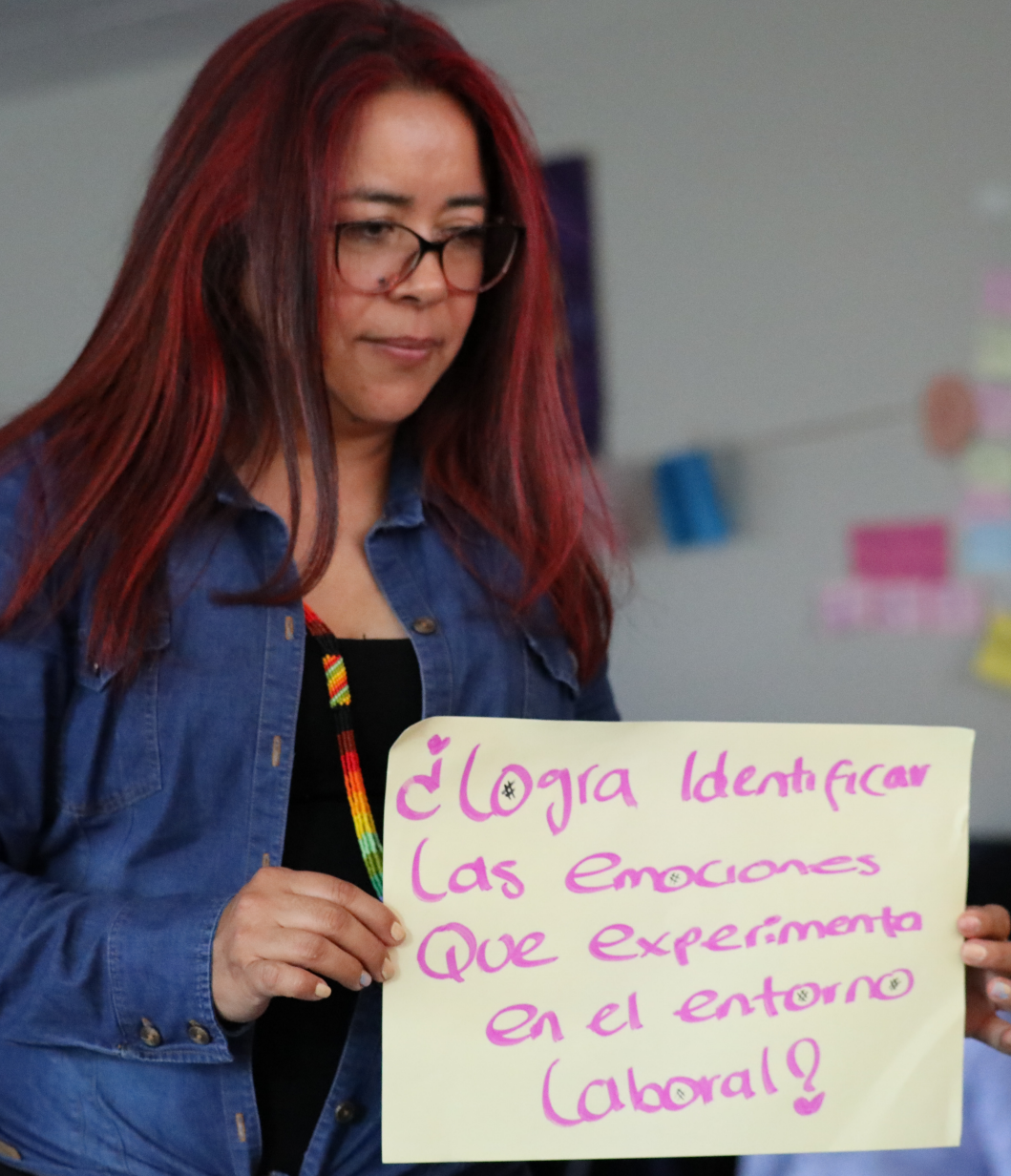
Seeking to strengthen institutional and community capacities in the promotion of mental health and the prevention of suicidal behaviour, we assisted the Health Secretariat, Empresa Social del Estado (ESE) Hospital Divino Niño, and the community of Tumaco in designing and implementing the 'Enjoy Your Life' strategy.

This assistance included training in and awareness-raising on mental health for institutional and cooperation actors, male and female community leaders, media, and local influencers. It also promoted coordination, the proper dissemination of mental health events, developing content and key messages on care, and finding help in emergencies.

In addition, under the framework of the World Mental Health Day, the 'Enjoy Your Life' strategy was launched, including a mental health services fair and performances from local artists. This launch included the participation of the municipal administration, health service providers, NGOs and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs).







Emotion recognition exercise. Bogotá. © IOM 2022

39 psychosocial and nursing practitioners from 18 departments in the country participated in the National MHPSS Technical Strengthening Meeting. Throughout this activity, we dialogued and reflected with participants on the individual and community approach to suicidal behaviour and psychoactive substance use; two mental health events that are currently worrisome public health threats.

## Institutional MHPSS actions

With the purpose of promoting mental health among local authorities, partners, and humanitarian workers, we conducted MHPSS awareness-raising and reflection activities.

### 📍 National | Participation in public discussion scenarios on mental health



Symposium on mental health. Cali, Valle del Cauca. © IOM 2022

The IOM participated in national and international spaces giving visibility to the MHPSS strategy and disseminating its approaches, principled approach and work, and its technical conceptualisation under the framework of the four levels of the **intervention pyramid proposed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)**.

The table below shows the activities and scenarios we attended.

Location	Event	Date	IOM Action
Cúcuta (Norte de Santander)	First summer school of the Págel Project: Prevention and Mitigation of the Health Effects of Migration and Violence on the Colombian-Venezuelan Border: A Contribution to the Colombian Peace Process.	September 22	Panel Discussion “Migration challenges for health and justice in Colombia.”
Cali (Valle del Cauca)	International Symposium “Mental Health, a challenge in post-pandemic times.”	October 3	Lecture “MHPSS in emergencies and displacements.”
Bogotá	XII International Congress on Migration and Mental Health.	October 19-21	Panel “Migration and mental health, an international organisations’ perspective.”
Riohacha (La Guajira)	Regional Paediatrics Congress with an emphasis on Social Paediatrics.	October 22	Lecture: Adolescent pregnancy, mental health implications.
Bogotá	X District Epidemiology and Public Health Event.	October 23 and 24	Exhibition: “Migration, mental health and community-based psychosocial support.”



## 9 Necoclí | MHPSS actions in transcontinental humanitarian response

To assist humanitarian workers supporting the humanitarian situation in Necoclí, Antioquia, and jointly create a collective care strategy that both benefits them and in which they can all participate, the IOM held the first meeting, denominated 'Taking a break to heal and recharge is needed to keep going,' to raise awareness on the importance of care and its modalities.

This activity was divided into three instances: the first allowed participants to get to know each other from different perspectives other than work; the second allowed them to recognise the care pathway taken and the scope of their actions; and the third was a space where they recalled protective factors to enhance their emergency response.

Humanitarian workers from E.S.E. Hospital San Sebastián de Urabá, the Colombian Institute of Tropical Medicine, Apoyar, HIAS, Red Cross and the IOM participated in this strategy.



Meeting 'Taking a break to heal and recharge is needed to keep going'. Necoclí, Antioquia. © IOM 2022

## 9 National | Socializing the MHPSS Manual with all target territories

Find out more  
about this action at



SCAN ME



Between 2021 and 2022, more than 500 people participated in the IOM's socialization process of the [Manual on Community-Based MHPSS in Emergencies and Displacement](#) across 18 departments in Colombia.

These spaces strengthened the institutional capacities of departmental and municipal territorial entities, health authorities, and some civil society organizations in the design, implementation, and evaluation of mental health and psychosocial support interventions, within their territories' emergency and displacement context, including migration; strengthening inter-institutional exchange, dialogue, and coordination.

Representatives from departmental and municipal health secretariats, other State entities, NGOs, representatives from the hospital network, male and female leaders from Community Health Networks, renowned academics, and the IOM participated in these events.



With financial support of





Group exercise under the framework of the care strategy for humanitarian workers. Necoclí, Antioquia. © IOM 2022

Under the framework of the first collective care session for humanitarian workers that assist refugees, migrants, and host populations in Necoclí, participants performed individual and self-reflective exercises, and also engaged in group activities on collective construction. This strengthened self-recognition and recognizing others, increased awareness on the importance of self-care and care for others, and consolidated bonds of trust.



