



Atlantic Council

ADRIENNE ARSHT
LATIN AMERICA CENTER



Advancing Health and Resilience Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean

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ADVANCING SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS COMMITMENTS

An initiative led by the Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center of the Atlantic Council and sponsored by the US Department of State focused on facilitating greater, constructive exchange among multisectoral thought leaders and government leaders as they work to implement commitments made at the IX Summit of the Americas. This readout was informed by a private roundtable hosted by the Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center and prepared by Isabel Chiriboga, Martin Cassinelli, and Diego Area.

Bottom line up front

During the Ninth Summit of the Americas, member states made a historic political pledge by committing to the Action Plan on Health and Resilience, which aims to strengthen access to and investment in health services and products in the Americas. As experts and practitioners deliberated on transforming this commitment into reality, they emphasized the crucial need for consistent multisectoral coordination on both new and existing initiatives. They also stressed the importance of addressing equity issues in the implementation efforts, with special emphasis on traditionally vulnerable groups whose healthcare access was affected most by COVID-19: children with disabilities, people with autism, and the elderly. They emphasized the need to develop accountability mechanisms ensuring that national health plans transcend political shifts and provide sustained access to financing to secure their sustainability and resilience. As human mobility across the Americas continues to grow, enhancing intra-regional cooperation on technology and digital infrastructure for data and information sharing will be key to addressing climate-related illnesses and other shared health challenges.

Key Commitments of the Action Plan on Health and Resilience

- The Ninth Summit of the Americas was attended by multisectoral stakeholders, including heads of state and government from the Americas in addition to representatives from the private sector, multilateral banks, and civil society. Recognizing the detrimental effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, participating countries made a political commitment through the Action Plan on Health and Resilience to
 1. Equitable access to health services and products;
 2. Invest in health systems;
 3. Strengthen emergency preparedness;
 4. Address non-communicable diseases; and
 5. Leverage technology appropriately.
- Member states also committed to enhancing intersectoral and intraregional cooperation to strengthen emergency preparedness and leverage access to technology for that purpose. The Health Action Plan outlines actionable steps to promote equitable access to medicines, digital tools, healthcare data, research and development, and supply-chain resilience.
- The summit emphasized the necessity of durable and greater investment in implementing epidemic surveillance systems, increasing the retention and availability of well-trained and qualified health workers, and strengthening institutional structures to provide universal health coverage in the Americas.



Recommendations for Advancing the Implementation of Durable Health Systems in the Americas

During an off-the-record private roundtable, thought leaders and practitioners from across the Americas discussed how to further enhance access to and finance for health services and products in the region. Discussants proposed key recommendations to strengthen health systems and outlined concrete recommendations for implementing the summit commitments on health in the Americas.

1. Enhance multisectoral coordination to streamline investment in existing initiatives and commitments.

- a. Leverage the Americas RISE for Health platform and other existing platforms to enhance collaboration and coordination among stakeholders, ensuring active participation and coordination among academia, civil society, the private sector, multilateral banks, and regional organizations such as the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).¹
- b. Lead the organization of biannual regional forums with member states to facilitate knowledge sharing and best practices for the implementation of the goals outlined in the Health Action Plan until 2030.²
- c. Consider incorporating the Action Plan on Health and Resilience into member states' broader commitments such as the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity (APEP), Alliance for Development in Democracy (ADD), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC), and other intraregional cooperation mechanisms and/or pledges that could play an important role in developing the necessary workforce and supply-chain resilience needed for sustainable health systems.³

- d. Promote further collaboration between the private and public sectors to develop effective communication channels for better alignment with ongoing initiatives, ensuring a coordinated effort to identify and address specific areas where private-sector support is needed and to avoid duplication of programs and efforts.⁴
- e. Promote regulatory-harmonization best practices across the region to facilitate access to telemedicine and other digital solutions to health problems between countries.

2. Enhance equitable and universal access to health services and products with a special emphasis on access to innovation and technology.

- a. Identify, address, and prevent barriers to health access in the Americas by finding innovative solutions that adapt to the lives of people in the region. Consider levels of informality, geographical location, workday hours, child and elderly care, public-transportation hours, security threats, and/or other factors that might be preventing access to health care.⁵
- b. Develop a targeted strategy to improve the presence and sustainable operation of healthcare workers in remote areas, where most of the populations are marginalized.⁶
- c. Promote targeted investment in health and digital infrastructure in remote areas of the Americas with little to no connectivity. This will facilitate affordability and access to digital health, taking one step further to promote primary-care access for all.

1. Action Plan for Health and Resilience at the IX Summit of the Americas. Action point #4 (h)
2. Action Plan for Health and Resilience at the IX Summit of the Americas. Action point #6
3. Action Plan for Health and Resilience at the IX Summit of the Americas. Action point #4 (b)
4. Action Plan for Health and Resilience at the IX Summit of the Americas. Action point #8
5. Action Plan for Health and Resilience at the IX Summit of the Americas. Action point #4.(b, 5)
6. Action Plan for Health and Resilience at the IX Summit of the Americas. Action point #4 (a)



d. Develop a plan to mitigate the high cost of innovative health technology, such as artificial intelligence, robotics, digital tools, and other research and development tools. Ensure that middle- and low-income countries can adequately finance these tools without raising healthcare costs for the population or weakening intellectual-property (IP) protective legislation or violating IP rights.

3. Consider the importance of sustained institutional capacity and proper country leadership to ensure consistent implementation efforts.

a. Empower civil-society organizations (CSOs) to play an active role in auditing and monitoring the implementation of national and local health initiatives through open engagement with governments. This will ensure accountability in the implementation of the Action Plan and other health-related commitments.⁷

b. Explore opportunities to integrate health initiatives into broader economic strategies, emphasizing the interconnectedness of health and a country's economic performance. Collaborate with local and international stakeholders to align health policies with sustainable economic-development goals.⁸

c. Advocate for countries to prioritize sustained financing for health systems, recognizing this as an investment in long-term public-health resilience. Develop mechanisms to ensure that health budgets are protected and sustained despite economic fluctuations and differing political interests.⁹

d. Address challenges around in-country institutional capacities, including leadership development, strategic planning, and regulatory frameworks aligned with international standards that ensure access to safe and effective therapies. Prioritize investments in training and capacity building to ensure that institutions are equipped to handle evolving health challenges.¹⁰



7. Action Plan for Health and Resilience at the IX Summit of the Americas. Action point #4 (g)

8. Action Plan for Health and Resilience at the IX Summit of the Americas. Action point #1 (2)

9. Action Plan for Health and Resilience at the IX Summit of the Americas. Action point #4 (j)

10. Action Plan for Health and Resilience at the IX Summit of the Americas. Action point #4 (h)