

Social Innovation Model in Health Care Systems for Reducing Severe Maternal Morbidity

COLOMBIA

Healthcare Workers Leading the Way in Maternal Health Improvements



BACKGROUND: Amid rising Venezuelan migration to Colombia and the COVID-19 pandemic, Colombia's National Institute of Health reported a significant rise in the Severe Maternal Morbidity (SMM) ratio among both Venezuelans and Colombians. USAID Local Health System Sustainability Project (LHSS) Colombia, with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, implemented a Social Innovation Model to reduce the SMM ratio.

HIGHLIGHTS:



The **Collaborative Improvement strategy** involved targeted training for healthcare workers in quality care for common obstetric complications, methodologies for implementing continuous improvement processes in managing pregnant individuals, and standardized protocols for perinatal services.



LHSS partnered with the Propacífico Foundation to implement the **Mentor Hospital strategy**. High-complexity hospitals (Mentors) provided technical and clinical support to medium and low-complexity hospitals (Mentees) to enhance their capacity for timely and quality care to pregnant individuals via telemedicine.

MAIN FACTS:



By addressing root causes, the strategy led to a 40% reduction in the SMM ratio among Colombian pregnant individuals and a 30,5% reduction for Venezuelan migrants between 2022 and August 2023, across 12 medium and high-complexity participating healthcare providers. **Four hospitals achieved reductions in SMM of 20-30%** (see chart).

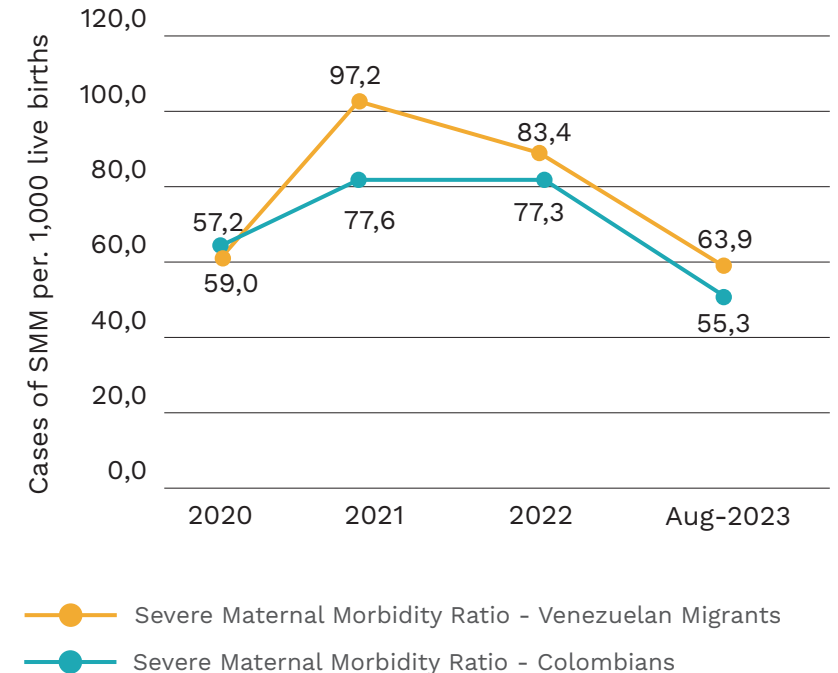


The referral rate from low and medium-complexity hospitals to high-complexity hospitals **decreased from 80% to 69% within one year** due to the Mentor Hospital strategy.



Fatalities due to SMM decreased from 0,67% in 2021 to 0,38% in 2023 across the 17 participating healthcare providers.

Trend of Severe Maternal Morbidity (SMM) ratio among 12 healthcare providers participating in the Collaborative Improvement Strategy



*The World Health Organization (WHO) defines severe maternal morbidity (SMM) as a state in which a woman nearly dies but survives a complication that occurred during pregnancy, childbirth, or within 42 days of the end of pregnancy.

Source: LHSS Colombia, with information provided by 12 healthcare providers participating in the Collaborative Improvement strategy, 2023.