

# HEALTH AND EDUCATION POLICY PLUS: Guatemala

## Project Overview

Health Policy Plus (HP+) is a five-year (2015–2020) U.S. Agency for International Development-funded project implemented by a consortium of partners, led by Palladium. HP+ strengthens policy design, implementation, and financing to improve the health and life prospects of people in more than a dozen countries worldwide. In Guatemala, HP+ operates as Health and Education Policy Plus (HEP+) where it builds on the accomplishments of successive policy projects to strengthen the governance, quality, and equity of public services in health, education, and nutrition.

## Our Work

### *Strengthening the health and education systems*

While Guatemala has made strides in its health and education sectors, challenges related to social and ethnic disparities in access to and uptake of services, low government investment, and the effective use of public resources continue to present obstacles to HEP+'s goals of increasing sustainability and improving gender equality and cultural equity in the country. HEP+ is working closely with the government and other partners to improve performance in the health and education sectors by:

- Strengthening management and governance of strategic planning, financial management and tracking, and transparency in budgeting, purchasing, and reporting
- Generating evidence, scenarios, and strategic options for a sector-wide health financing strategy

- Implementing a decentralization strategy and pilot programs
- Improving the mechanisms for transparency and collaboration in health and nutrition policy processes
- Strengthening multisectoral structures that promote transparency, accountability, and better policies and services in health and nutrition
- Improving the educational prospects for in- and out-of-school youth

### *Engaging civil society to improve governance*

Active participation of civil society groups in policy processes helps redress long-standing inequities in health, well-being, and education. HEP+ strengthens the capacity of civil society groups to engage in policy dialogue; monitor the performance of government social programs; advocate effectively; and keep health, nutrition, and education on the policy agenda. These efforts encompass:

- Enhancing civil society capacity and sustainability through systems-based analysis and collaborative actions
- Strengthening the links between civil society networks and the media, nongovernmental organizations, religious institutions, the private sector, and others to advance sustainable development goals in health and education
- Equipping civil society networks to gather data from field monitoring exercises and use quantitative and qualitative evidence to improve their advocacy and policy dialogue efforts

## ***Developing strategic information systems to improve decision-making and advocacy***

HEP+ develops tools that help people use data in policy decision-making and advocacy. In the past, only a small group of specialists could access data on government performance in the health and education sectors, and the systems and applications that housed this data were confusing and inefficient. HEP+ works with country partners to address these challenges by:

- Enhancing information systems to improve the management and provision of health and education services
- Developing capabilities for data analysis, including financial data
- Strengthening access to, and use and adoption of, the national information system to improve decision making
- Increasing data use through innovations such as mobile applications with on- and off-line capabilities and the application of guided analytics and user-centered design principles

## ***Supporting marginalized groups to participate in policy processes and advance gender equity***

HEP+ supports indigenous networks, women's groups, men's groups, youth activists, and other groups to improve government policies and programs. Activities include the following:

- Strengthening female leadership and participation, especially among indigenous women, in advocacy and other policy processes
- Incorporating “new masculinities”—a concept that promotes gender equity, responsible paternity, and the prevention of violence against women—into policies, schools, and health services

- Supporting civil society groups to increase their influence through strategic alliances with mass media outlets, universities, congressional committees, private sector partners, and others
- Developing tools that offer stakeholders ready access to health and education data disaggregated by sex, ethnic group, residence, and other variables

## **For More Information, Contact**

### **HP+**

Suneeta Sharma, PhD

Project Director

[suneeta.sharma@thepalladiumgroup.com](mailto:suneeta.sharma@thepalladiumgroup.com)

Tel: +1.202.775.9680

### **HEP+ Guatemala**

Herminia Reyes

Country Director

[herminia.reyes@thepalladiumgroup.com](mailto:herminia.reyes@thepalladiumgroup.com)

Tel: +502.2367.0787 or +502.2367.0788

## **Health Policy Plus**

1331 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20004

[www.healthpolicyplus.com](http://www.healthpolicyplus.com)

[policyinfo@thepalladiumgroup.com](mailto:policyinfo@thepalladiumgroup.com)

HP+ is a five-year cooperative agreement funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development under Agreement No. AID-OAA-A-15-00051, beginning August 28, 2015. HP+ is implemented by Palladium, in collaboration with Avenir Health, Futures Group Global Outreach, Plan International USA, Population Reference Bureau, RTI International, ThinkWell, and the White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood.

This publication was produced for review by the U.S. Agency for International Development. It was prepared by HP+. The information provided in this document is not official U.S. Government information and does not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the U.S. Agency for International Development or the U.S. Government.

Photo by Carla Matta.