

Call for case studies - Healthy Aging

(New deadline July 23th, 2017)

1. Introduction

The South American Institute of Government in Health (ISAGS) is an intergovernmental public organization associated to the Health Council of the Union of South American Nations. As a center of high studies and debate of public policies, its actions contribute to the development of governance and leadership in health in South America. As part of its activities it carries out research on health policy in areas prioritized by UNASUR member countries. As one of these priority areas, the project related to Healthy Aging is currently being developed under the coordination of the Health Systems and Social Determination of Health areas.

The population aging process is accelerating globally, and South America is not an exception; this phenomenon is especially acute due to the combined impact of the decrease in birth rate and rapidly increasing life expectancy. It is important to remember that aging is a universal process for each individual, as everyone ages from birth; however in societies aging is not inevitable, because it depends on relative rates of birth and life expectancy. In the continent the average duration of life should increase by 44% until the year 2055. This has many impacts on the sustainability of many social systems, especially in Social Security and health services. The way in which these impacts occur depends on many factors, related to changes in the determinants of health, the balance between prevention/treatment, technological development and its distribution in society. Initially projected supposedly catastrophic impacts can be counteracted with public policies that prioritize interventions on society and lifestyles (consumption, risks). The exclusive bet on medicalized interventions can, conversely, accelerate the economic impact of a progressively aging society.

Given this background, the objective of this ISAGS project is to characterize the process of aging in the region with emphasis on the impact on health systems, and strategies aimed at the improvement in living conditions of the population of older adults.

To illustrate such strategies and identify mechanisms and define lessons for the development and implementation of public policies for healthy ageing, ISAGS will support the documentation and dissemination of at least three case studies on interventions in countries from the region. The desired approach to develop a case study should emphasize the social, economic, cultural and political conditions that frame the public policies that address the living conditions of elders. ISAGS will support the process of collection of information, publication and dissemination of case studies, in addition to providing limited funding to supplement current resources for the selected research teams. This financial support will depend on the nature of the proposed research, its duration and the availability of alternative or complementary sources of financing.



2. Background

South America, like most of the world, is experiencing an accelerated aging of its population. Although there are considerable variations between and within countries, it is a phenomenon that is widespread in the region and current projections suggest that this trend will continue.

These population changes imply an enormous challenge for public policy in the region, including large pressure on health systems, as well as the need to promote good quality of life for the older populations. Countries from the region have participated in different international commitments such as the Brazilian Declaration^{[ii](#)} and the San Jose Charter on the Rights of the Elderly in Latin America and the Caribbean^{[iii](#)}, where guidelines for the development of the rights of older persons are established.

A better understanding of the phenomenon of aging, its impacts on health systems, and on how to implement interventions to improve the quality of life of older adults may contribute to the implementation of effective policies for this group of the population in the region as well as the promotion of integrative actions in this matter.

3. Objectives

- to identify multi-sectoral public policies, strategies or interventions aimed at the improvement of the quality of life of the elderly in South America.
- to identify areas, strategies and successful mechanisms of action in the promotion of healthy aging in South America.
- to draw lessons for the national authorities of different sectors in the formulation and implementation of policies for healthy aging.

4. Scope and methodology

The proposed case-studies must correspond to policies or interventions implemented in any of the 12 countries in the region during the last 10 years and which have impacted on the improvement of living conditions of the populations of older adults.

Studies must be conducted using the methodology of case study (e.g., Yin, 1994).

The study should focus on describing the policy/intervention applied, its impact on the living conditions of the older population, analysis of factors and stakeholders that influenced the outcome; and main lessons for the design and implementation of policies for healthy aging.

The case studies should be developed within a month's period and they should have not been previously published in any format. The ownership of the resulting documents will correspond to ISAGS.

5. Expressions of interest

Expressions of interest should be sent by email to franciscoarmada@isags-unasur.org by **July 23th, 2017**. The proposals must have 1500 words maximum and include the following information:

- **The policy or intervention.** A summary of the policy or intervention on healthy aging, indicating stakeholders.
- **Strategy to document the case and the impact of the policy.** Should describe the methodology, sources of information and data to be used in the research.
- **Brief description of the resources required, financing available, specifying source and how funding by the ISAGS (of up to 500 USD) would be used.**
- **General overview of lessons learned.**
- **Brief description of the institution and researchers.**

6. Languages

The expressions of interest might be submitted in Spanish, English or Portuguese. The cases studies will be prepared in English or Spanish with a summary in the other language.

7. Selection

The cases will be selected based on their relevancy, availability of funds as well as in the strengths of the researchers or research team. The total number of case-studies is expected to select up to 5 case-studies. No more than one case study will be selected for the same country. The call is open to researchers in the region with proven relevant previous experiences, particularly in public health research, health systems in South America, and health economics; links to universities and/or ministries of health is an advantage.

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