



Colombia Earthquake

Situation Report #5

October 5, 2026

Project HOPE has established and supported mobile medical units in affected communities following the recent 7.4-magnitude earthquake, which brought severe damage and destroyed health infrastructure in areas already affected by deep poverty.

Situational Context

Nearly two months after a 7.4-magnitude earthquake struck near San José del Palmar in Chocó Department, families in Colombia face persistent health needs. As response efforts shift into the early recovery phase, estimates show that over 400,000 people have been affected. Recent reporting shows that at least 364,000 families registered for assistance following the August 10 earthquake and the disaster ultimately killed 335 people and injured over 4,500 others. The rapid response of the Colombian government and various NGOs met many immediate needs within impacted areas, but **gaps still exist, particularly in rural areas**. Rural communities need consistent and reliable clean water supplies, support for survivors dealing with significant mental health impacts, and assistance for those still displaced in shelters.

Project HOPE's Response

Project HOPE's Emergency Response Team has responded to urgent needs across several affected departments in Colombia, including Chocó, Caldas, Risaralda, and Valle del Cauca. **Project HOPE's programming has remained focused on keeping healthcare**

Key Statistics

↑ Recent estimates show over **400,000** people affected

↑ At least **330** people died and **4,500** others were injured

Project HOPE Updates

- **Project HOPE recently launched mobile medical units (MMUs)** in rural communities where local health facilities collapsed outside Roldanillo, disrupting access to critical health services. With additional funding, Project HOPE could reach more areas where access to care is fragile.
- Across the affected area, **mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services are in high demand** as survivors and families address the trauma and stress of recent events.
- Project HOPE has also supported MMU services at four shelter locations in Pereira, providing over 500 consultations.

services available and addressing urgent health needs, particularly for those living in displacement settings and rural communities. By launching MMUs, our team has improved access to care for those most affected by this disaster.

Project HOPE's MMU services have supported four local shelters in Pereira over the course of one month, reaching a catchment area of nearly 1,500 displaced community members. **Two rotating teams consisting of one doctor, two nurses, and two psychologists have conducted over 527 medical consultations and 274 psychological support sessions**, in addition to providing overnight support to each shelter so that families with the most acute needs had access to the care they needed.

Beyond Pereira, Project HOPE MMUs are targeting isolated communities within Valle del Cauca, starting in areas surrounding Roldanillo. The city of Roldanillo, which is located in the Cordillera Occidental mountains, was visited by Project HOPE's team in the first week after the earthquake. At the time, our team assessed the damage to health facilities and supplied diapers, antibacterial wipes, and dental hygiene supplies to the Ministry of Health for further distribution to a municipal elderly care facility. Now, Project HOPE is operating MMUs in six communities outside of the city, ensuring access to essential medical and mental health services in areas where healthcare access was severely damaged after the earthquake caused local medical facilities to collapse. These MMUs began operations last week in Higuercito and Santa Rita.



A Colombian man speaks with a team member inside a mental health tent at one of Project HOPE's MMUs. Photo by Project HOPE staff, 2026.

Since the beginning of our response, Project HOPE has distributed supplies and provided services in hard-to-reach areas, traversing remote communities, navigating difficult terrain, and overcoming security concerns — even using river barges and walking by foot to deliver hygiene kits in the immediate aftermath. Additionally, Project HOPE has delivered urgently needed medicines and essential supplies to eight urban shelters. Due to the increased traffic to health facilities after the earthquake, Project HOPE has supported key facilities through the delivery of essential medicines and supplies, including San Joaquin Hospital in Pereira.

Project HOPE has had a continued presence in Colombia since 2018, strengthening the health system and responding to urgent needs. In coordination with local health officials

“Some are feeling hopeless about the situation and don’t know what will happen [to their communities.] People are looking to recover their livelihoods, but they also need health, as well as mental health and psychosocial support.”

*— Pamela Londoño Salazar,
Project HOPE Global Mental
Health Advisor*

and national partners, Project HOPE has improved access to healthcare by providing primary and maternal health consultations, distributing hygiene kits, operating MHPSS programs, conducting health brigades, providing social work and support services to displaced families, repairing water and hygiene infrastructure, and training health workers in a variety of subjects.

Project HOPE has responded to multiple rapid-onset disasters in recent years, including the August 2026 Nepal flash floods and the June 2026 Venezuela earthquake — where our teams continue to respond to long-term needs. Our team also responded to the 2025 Myanmar earthquake, the 2023 Türkiye-Syria earthquakes, the 2023 Morocco earthquake, the 2022 West Java earthquake, and the 2021 Haiti earthquake.



Project HOPE's team in Colombia delivers essential medicines to a health facility facing increased demand after the earthquakes. Photo by Charlie Cordero for Project HOPE, 2026.