

HEALTH SERVICES FOR MIRAFLORES, IN SOUTHERN COLOMBIA

Photo: Fernando Soto



Miraflores population receives medical treatment in specialties that its local hospital is in no condition to provide due to a lack of resources.

The U.S. Government frequently hosts health brigades in rural zones of Colombia, which seek to benefit the most underserved population sectors.

On June 15, at the Albert Schweitzer Hospital in the town of Miraflores (Guaviare department in Southern Colombia), 20 doctors treated nearly 1,100 people. They provided much needed medical care in family medicine, ophthalmology, dermatology, gynecology, otorhinolaryngology and physical therapy. Over 200 people also received dental care treatment.

This brigade was a bilateral effort made possible by the Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS), the Military Group (MILGROUP), the Colombian National Police (CNP), and the Colombian National Navy. The U.S. donated \$20,000 in medicines, guaranteeing that all patients would follow the treatments prescribed by the doctors.

The Albert Schweitzer Hospital lacks a laboratory and diagnostic imaging facilities, and its activity is limited

due to the lack of resources and staff. Only two doctors are available to treat the entire population.

HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE MOST UNDERSERVED POPULATION

This health brigade in Miraflores is just one of the many that have been held jointly by the American and Colombian governments, to take these services to distant regions. In the last year these activities have been held in such places as San José del Guaviare, in Guaviare Department, Caucasia, in Antioquia Department and Tumaco, in Nariño Department, where 4,112 people were treated. These all-day events provide medical care in family & specialized medicine, optometry, dentistry, audiometry, pediatrics, dermatology and physical therapy.

In Tumaco, 1,092 people were treated in family medicine, 190 in optometry, 137 in dentistry and 51 in audiometry.

The U.S. Embassy and the Colombian Antinarcotics Police (DIRAN) support these events by providing air transport and medical personnel. The United States also supplied medicines for the Miraflores population.

In addition, the Colombian Antinarcotics Police Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program carried out educational programs that seek to prevent the use of illegal drugs among children and young people.

