

**The Political Dimension of Health Reform:
The Case of Mexico and Colombia**

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**Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Science of the University of London for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy**

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March 2001

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Gill Walt, whose intellectual guidance and constant support were invaluable in making possible the completion of this thesis. I would also like to thank Anne Mills and Rene Dazinger, the members of my Advisory Committee at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, for support in the preparation and refining of the research proposal that led to this thesis.

At the Harvard School of Public Health, I would like to thank Peter Berman for inviting me to join the Data for Decision Making Project and with this, making it possible to expand the depth and scope of my research. I am also thankful to Tom Bossert for his comments on the findings of the case studies and the preliminary analysis. I am in debt to Merilee Grindle, at the Harvard Institute for International Development for commenting on the first draft of the literature review, discussing with me how best to present my argument, and commenting on the analytical chapter. I also wish to thank Joan Nelson, at the Woodrow Wilson International Centre, for letting me share my preliminary findings in her seminar at the Overseas Development Council and for commenting on the analysis and conclusions of this thesis.

At the Department of Political Science at ITAM, I would like to thank Federico Estévez for his fifteen year long close mentorship, and for having convinced me to embrace the political economy discipline - and to hold on to it. I remain in debt with him for his careful revision of several versions of the analytical chapter in the thesis. I would also like to thank Alejandro Poiré for his patient listening and support in dealing with the intellectual and other quests behind this work.

During fieldwork in Colombia and Mexico, I was supported by a large number of colleagues without whose help this work would not have been possible. In particular, I would like to thank Patricia Ramírez, Olivia Mogollón, Carlos Cruz and Ana Cueva. I also thank Elena Carrera and Martine Donoghue for their support and help in the final stages of this process. Above all, I am grateful to the many actors who, at the expense of their scarce time, participated in interviews and numerous informal meetings sharing their knowledge and experience, and volunteering the information and documents that made this thesis unique.

The British Council and CONACYT provided funding for the completion of the Ph.D. degree. The thesis research was funded by a grant from the Pan American Health Organisation, and the Wellcome Gordon Smith Travelling Grant. Part of the field trips to conduct further interviews was sponsored by the *USAID-funded Health Policy Process Project*. I thank the Centre for Population and Development Studies at the Harvard School of Public Health for providing me with the institutional support required for the preparation of this thesis.

Finally, my greatest debt of gratitude is owed to my husband, Alberto Islas. His patience and care have known no limits. He has been a guiding figure in the intellectual evolution of this work, teaching me about policy making 'in the real world' and about how to analyse it. For five years he has also offered hands on help in every possible aspect related to my research. Above all, he has given me the courage to bring this ambitious task to completion.

Abstract

This thesis analyses the state's capacity to pursue health reform. It argues that the feasibility of health reforms, as well as their final content, are in great part determined by their political context, and the political strategies reformers resort to when pursuing their policy agenda. The analysis is framed in the political context in which a reform initiative evolves, the political dynamics of and around the health reform process, and the characteristics and strategies of the teams in charge of leading policy change (change teams). The research aims to contribute to existing knowledge in the health policy field by furthering the analysis and explanation of the political feasibility of health reforms.

A two case study comparative analysis is used based on primary and secondary sources and in-country interviewing. Colombia and Mexico, challenged by the need to attain universal coverage, and faced with large inefficiencies, set about to transform their health systems in the 1990's. While Colombia was successful in passing legislation and initiating implementation, Mexico made a series of similar attempts, but its reform was brought to a near halt. The analysis of these contrasting outcomes given the similar choice of political strategies in comparable political contexts, allows for a greater understanding of the factors at play.

Key findings demonstrate the relevance of the political context in determining the potential of interested actors within and outside the state, to influence health reforms. The study also reveals the remarkable resemblance between the political strategies used by health reform teams, and those used by economic adjustment teams in the 1980's. While these strategies enabled the latter to introduce major policy change, they helped health reform teams only partially. As a result, health reformers were successful in enabling the creation of new private health financing and provider organisations, but the transformation of the old public health service institutions remains a challenge.

Acronyms for Colombia

Acronym	Spanish	English
ACEMI	Asociación Colombiana de Medicina Prepagada	Association of Pre-paid Medicine Organisations
AD-M19	Alianza Democrática M-19	Democratic Alliance M-19
Affiliate	La persona que se afilia a la entidad promotora de salud	A person who pays a premium to enrol in an EPS
ANC	Asamblea Nacional Constituyente	National Constituent Assembly
ANDI	Asociación Nacional de Industriales	National Industry Association
ANIF	Asociación Nacional de Instituciones Financieras	Financial Institutions National Association
ARS	Administradora Régimen Subsidiado	Subsidised Health Plan Management Organisation #
ASCOFAME	Asociación Colombiana de Facultades de Medicina	Colombian Medical School Association
ASMEDAS	Asociación Médica Colombiana	Colombian Medical Association
ASOBANCARIA	Asociación Bancaria	Banks Association
AVISA	“Años de Vida Saludables”	Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs)
CAJANAL	Caja Nacional de Previsión	National Prevision Institute
CCF	Caja de Compensación Familiar	Health Co-operative Organisation
CNSSS	Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Social en Salud	National Council for Social Security in Health
CONPES	Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social	National Council on Social and Economic Policy
CONSENSO	Consenso	Consensus (think tank)
CUT	Central Unitaria de Trabajadores	Workers Unitary Union

DNP	Departamento Nacional de Planeación	National Planning Department
ECOPETROL	Empresa Colombiana de Petróleo	Colombian Oil Enterprise
ECV	Encuesta de Calidad de Vida	Quality of Life Survey
ELN	Ejército de Liberación Nacional	National Army for Liberation
Enrolee	Persona cubierta por una EPS: el afiliado o sus familiares	Person covered by an EPS: affiliate or his / her family members
EPS	Entidad Promotora de Salud	Health Service Provider for the Regular Health Plan
ESE	Empresas Sociales del Estado	Health Service Provider Institution for State Employees
ESS	Empresas Solidarias de Salud	Health Service Provider for the Subsidised Health Plan Health
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia	Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces
FASECOLDA	Federación de Aseguradores Colombianos	Colombian Insurers Federation
FEDESARROLLO	Fundación para la Educación Superior y el Desarrollo	Higher Education and Development Foundation
FENALCO	Federación Nacional de Comerciantes	National Traders Federation
FES	Fundación para la Educación Superior	Higher Education Foundation
FECODE	Federación Colombiana de Educadores	Colombian Teachers Federation
FESCOL	Fundación Friedrich Ebert de Colombia	Colombian Friedrich Ebert Foundation
FOSYGA	Fondo de Solidaridad y Garantía	Solidarity Fund
FRB	Fundación Restrepo Barco	Restrepo Barco Foundation
ICBF	Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar	Colombian Institute of Family Welfare
IDB	Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo	Inter-American Development Bank
IPS	Instituciones Prestadoras de Servicios	Health Service Provider Institutions

ISS	Instituto de Seguros Sociales	Institute of Social Security
IVA	Impuesto de Valor Agregado	Value Added Tax –VAT
M-19	Movimiento Revolucionario 19 de Abril	Revolutionary Movement April 19
MOH	Ministerio de Salud	Ministry of Health
MSN	Movimiento de Salvación Nacional	National Salvation Movement
NGO	Organizacion no Gubernamental	Non-governmental Organisation
POS	Plan Obligatorio de Salud	Mandatory Health Plan
POS-S	Plan Obligatorio de Salud Subsidiado	Mandatory Subsidised Health Plan
PRT	Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores	Workers Revolutionary Party
RAP	Prima con Ajuste de Riesgo	Risk Adjustment Premium
SINTRA-ISS	Sindicato de Trabajadores del ISS	ISS Workers Union
SISBEN	Sistema de Identificación de Beneficiarios de los Subsidios del Estado	Identification System of Government Subsidy Beneficiaries
SOAT	Tarifas para el Seguro de Accidentes de Tránsito	Tariff schedule of fee-for-service reimbursement for medical procedures
UP	Unión Patriótica	Patriotic Union: FARC political movement
UPC	Unidad de Pago por Capitación	Risk Adjusted per capita Payment
USO	Union Sindical Obrera	Workmen Union
WB	Banco Mundial	World Bank

Acronyms - Mexico

Acronym	Spanish	English Translation
AMGD	Áreas Médicas de Gestión Desconcentrada	Decentralised Medical Areas
DALYS	Años de Vida Saludable (AVISA)	Daily Adjusted Life Years
DRGs	Grupos relacionados por diagnóstico	Diagnostic-related groups
IVCM	Seguro de Invalidez, Vejez, Cesantía en Edad Avanzada y Muerte	Pensions Insurance
MIAIS	Modelo Institucional de Atención Integral de la Salud	Institutional Model for Comprehensive Health Services
PRONASOL (Solidaridad)	Programa Nacional de Solidaridad	National Solidarity Program
PRSS	Programa de Reforma del Sector Salud	Health Sector Reform Program
SAR	Sistema de Ahorro para el Retiro	Retirement Savings System
SCNS	Sistema Nacional de Cuentas de Salud	National Health Accounts System
SEM	Seguro de Enfermedades y Maternidad	Illness and Maternity Insurance
SINDAS	Sistema de Incentivos al Desempeño en Áreas de Salud	Performance Incentives System for Health Care personnel.
SNCS	Sistema Nacional de Cuentas de Salud	National Health Accounts System
SSF	Seguro de Salud para la Familia	Family Health Insurance
ABM	Asociación de Banqueros de México	Mexico's Bankers Association
AFORE	Administradora de Fondos para el Retiro	Pension Funds Administrator

AMIS	Asociación Mexicana de Instituciones de Seguros	Mexican Association of Insurance Institutions
CANACINTRA	Cámara Nacional de la Industria de la Transformación	National Chamber of Transformation Industry
CCE	Consejo Coordinador Empresarial	Business Co-ordinating Council
CEDESS	Centro de Desarrollo Estratégico para la Seguridad Social	Strategic Development Centre for Social Security
CNC	Confederación Nacional Campesina	National Peasant Confederation
CNSF	Comisión Nacional de Seguros y Fianzas	National Commission of Insurance and Bail Bonds.
CNOP	Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Populares	National Confederation of Popular Organisations
CONAPO	Consejo Nacional de Población	National Population Council
CONCAMIN	Confederación de Cámaras Industriales	Confederation of Industrial Chambers
CONCANACO	Confederación de Cámaras Nacionales de Comercio	Confederation of National Commerce Chambers
CONSAR	Comisión Nacional del Sistema de Ahorro para el retiro	National Committee for the Retirement Savings System
COPARMEX	Confederación Patronal de la República Mexicana	Mexican Republic Employers Confederation
CT	Congreso del Trabajo	Workers Congress
CTM	Confederación de Trabajadores de México	Mexico's Workers Confederation
FSTSE	Federación de Sindicatos de Trabajadores al Servicio del Estado	Federation of State Workers Unions
FUNSALUD	Fundación Mexicana para la Salud	Mexican Health Foundation
IMSS	Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social	Mexican Institute for Social Security

ISES	Instituciones de Seguros en Salud	Health Insurance Administrators (HMO's)
INSP	Instituto Nacional de Salud Pública	National Institute of Public Health
ISSSTE	Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales de los Trabajadores del Estado	State Workers' Social Security and Services Institute
ITAM	Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México	Mexican Technological Autonomous Institute
PAN	Partido Acción Nacional	National Action Party
PRD	Partido de la Revolución Democrática	Democratic Revolution Party
PRI	Partido Revolucionario Institucional	Institutional Revolutionary Party
PT	Partido del Trabajo	Labour Party
SECOFI	Secretaría de Comercio y Fomento Industrial	Commerce Ministry
SNTSS	Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores del Seguro Social	National Union of Social Security Workers
SPP	Secretaría de Programación y Presupuesto	Planning Ministry
SSA	Secretaría de Salubridad y Asistencia	Health Ministry
SSPEMEX	Servicios de Salud de PEMEX	Health Services for Oil Workers
SSSD	Servicios de Seguridad y Salud del Ejército	Health Services of the Army
SSSM	Servicios de Seguridad y Salud de la Marina	Health Services for the Navy
STPS	Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social	Labour Ministry
UNAM	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	Mexico's National Autonomous University
UNT	Unión Nacional de Trabajadores	National Workers' Union