

In 1990, I graduated as a physician from the University of Carabobo (Venezuela). In 1996, I completed a two-year residence program in the field of Family Medicine at the same University in which I was certified as specialist. This training was followed by a Master Scientiarum Community Health awarded by the University Laval in Quebec (Canada) in 2000. I worked for 7 years (1990-1997) as a clinician in two Venezuelan Social Security Health Centers as an intern, resident and family doctor practitioner. During the same period, I worked as a part-time instructor in the Social Sciences Department of the Health Sciences Faculty of the University of Carabobo, Valencia (Venezuela).



Following my postgraduate studies, I started working with international medical humanitarian missions outside my home country. These missions included work in rural health, primary health care, prison health and support for the victims of war, internal conflicts and urban violence. Initially, I undertook a short training mission with the Canadian Association for the Advancement of United Nations (Quebec chapter) in Haiti (1998) and then acted as a medical coordinator in Afghanistan (2000-2001) with the French NGO Medical International Aid (AMI). Since the end of 2001, I have worked in the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) in Guinea Conakry (2002-2003), ex-URSS Central Asian countries (2003-2004), Iraq (2005-2006), Republic of Georgia (2006-2008) and Brazil (2008-2010).

Currently, as part of a sabbatical, I am enrolled in the Forensic Mental Health program at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Australia. This program is a joint initiative between UNSW and the Justice Health branch of the NSW government; it allows me to explore current concepts and theories in mental health. Mental health particularly in the contexts of war, urban violence and confinement has increasingly become a major challenge for humanitarian health professionals in their mission to alleviate human suffering.