

# 2014 Vaccination

Your best shot!

#bestshot



#getvax

Vaccination Week in the Americas

[www.paho.org/vwa](http://www.paho.org/vwa)



Pan American  
Health  
Organization



World Health  
Organization  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE  
Americas

26 APRIL-3 MAY 2014

FINAL REPORT

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“For the past 12 years, Vaccination Week in the Americas has opened the doors of immunization to people throughout our hemisphere, regardless of where they were born, who they are, or where they live. Children, pregnant mothers, health workers and older adults today have free access to vaccines against more than 20 dangerous diseases, including polio, measles, rubella, whooping cough and influenza. These vaccines save lives and protect individuals and families from illness.”

– Dr. Carissa Etienne, PAHO Director

## Overview: Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

### History

In 2002, prompted by a measles outbreak in Venezuela and Colombia, the health ministers of countries in the Andean sub region proposed a coordinated international vaccination effort to help prevent future outbreaks. This proposal led to the creation of Vaccination Week in the Americas (VWA), which was held for the first time in April 2003; later that same year VWA was endorsed by a resolution during the Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

### About VWA

Led by the countries and territories of the Region, VWA is an effort to advance equity and access to vaccination. Country participation in VWA is flexible and national activities are selected annually based on current public health priorities; however, at the core of the initiative are efforts to reach out and vaccinate populations with little or no access to regular health services, such as those populations living in urban fringes, rural and border areas and in indigenous communities. By “reaching the unreached,” VWA contributes to strengthening national immunization programs across the Americas. The initiative has also provided an important platform for raising public awareness regarding the importance of immunization and for keeping the topic on the forefront of political agendas and in the media spotlight.

VWA has become a bright example of what can happen when countries work together, across borders and in different languages, to improve their populations’ health. In 2014, VWA was included as one of the five memorable movements in public health by the Global Development Professionals Network of the Guardian Newspaper (U.K). [Click to read more.](#)

April 2014 marked the 12<sup>th</sup> year that the countries and territories of the Americas and the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) have come together to celebrate Vaccination Week in the Americas (VWA). Since 2003, more than 519 million people of all ages have been vaccinated through a diverse array of campaigns conducted under the umbrella of this monumental initiative.

The 2014 regional slogan was “Vaccination: Your Best Shot,” chosen to encourage people to protect themselves and the Region against the importation of polio, measles, and other vaccine-preventable diseases, in the context of upcoming mass events, including the 2014 World Cup in Brazil (12 June – 13 July 2014).

VWA was celebrated this year by 44 countries and territories. Dozens of events were held across the Region to launch the week, ranging from national celebrations with the participation of presidents and other high level authorities, to intimate events held in villages with the participation of local communities. Under the framework of VWA, thousands of health workers vaccinated more than 51 million people of all ages, including those living in remote, border, and urban fringe areas, indigenous populations, and other at-risk groups against a wide range of diseases such as poliomyelitis, rubella, congenital rubella syndrome, measles, diphtheria, mumps, whooping cough, neonatal tetanus, influenza, yellow fever, diarrhea caused by rotavirus, bacterial pneumonia, and human papilloma virus, among others.

Many countries also used Vaccination Week to carry out other preventive health measures, including deworming, vitamin A supplementation, blood pressure, blood sugar, BMI and vision screening, a bike-a-thon, Chikungunya and dengue control and prevention, and dental care, among other efforts.



Measles/Rubella  
Vaccination Campaign,  
Paraguay, April 2014



# IMMUNIZE FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE

World Immunization Week 2014, 24-30 April



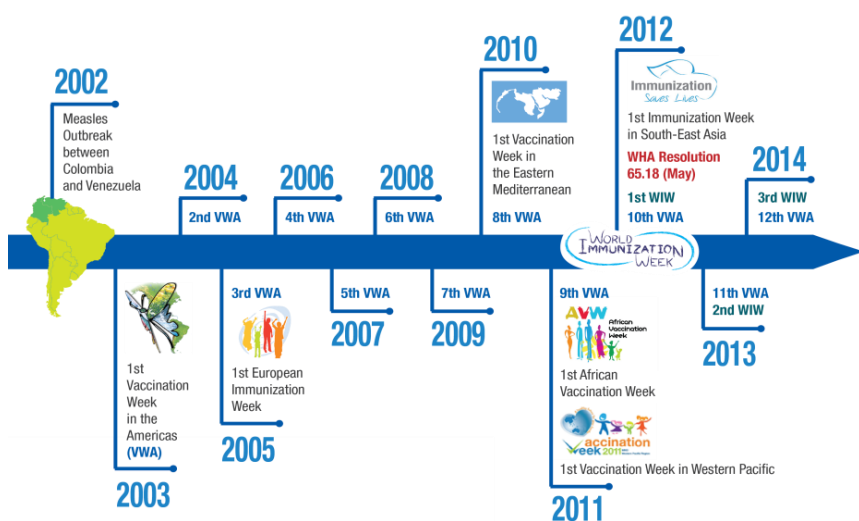
Following the initial success of VWA, all other regions of the World Health Organization (WHO) came on board with similar sister initiatives (see timeline below), a global movement which culminated in the establishment of World Immunization Week (WIW) in 2012. WIW has been endorsed by the World Health Assembly and represents the overarching umbrella for all unique regional efforts.

The 2014 [WIW communication campaign](#) was based around the slogan “Are you up-to-date?” This global campaign aimed to fill in the knowledge gaps that can prevent people from getting vaccinated. Specific goals of the campaign included making sure populations:

- know what vaccines are available to protect them against disease;
- are motivated to check the vaccination status of themselves and their families; and
- obtain the vaccines they need from their local health practitioner.



Efforts to increase public understanding of the benefits of immunization are one of the key objectives of the [Global Vaccine Action Plan \(GVAP\)](#), an international framework to prevent millions of deaths by 2020 through more equitable access to existing vaccines. The call to action employed by WHO during WIW 2014 was “Immunize for a healthy future – Know. Check. Protect.” Among the communication resources developed at the global level was an online, multilingual [toolbox](#), which allowed individual countries to customize their own WIW posters, choosing from a variety of backgrounds and images of people. A 30-second public service announcement (PSA) was also created and provided for country download.



## LINKS TO OTHER REGIONAL EFFORTS

[African Vaccination Week](#)

[Vaccination Week in the Eastern Mediterranean](#)

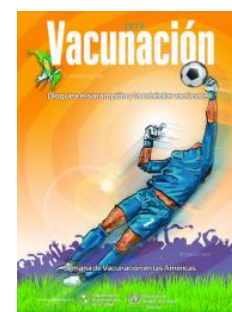
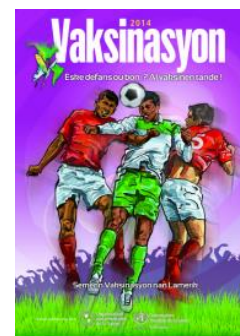
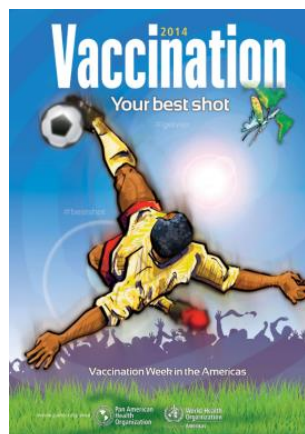
[European Immunization Week](#)

[Immunization Week in South-East Asia](#)

[Immunization Week in the Western Pacific](#)

In the Americas, endemic transmission of measles was interrupted in 2002 and the transmission of rubella in 2009. However, some countries in the Region have continued to report cases linked to disease importations from areas of the world where these viruses continues to circulate widely.

The regional communication campaign for VWA 2014 was centered on the need to mobilize efforts to enhance vaccination coverage and fortify epidemiological surveillance in the light of the 2014 World Cup in Brazil and other upcoming mass events in the Americas. Such events carry with them an increased risk for disease importation and subsequent dissemination if levels of population protection are not adequate. The 2014 World Cup was expected to attract some 600,000 visitors from around the world; out of the 32 countries with teams participating, 19 had reported measles cases in 2013. The 2014 VWA slogan "Vaccination: Your best shot!" (Vacunación: tu mejor jugada) took advantage of the widespread popularity of football/soccer across much of the Americas to encourage vaccination.



**Regional Slogan: "Vaccination: Your best shot."**

Sub-Slogans:

- Block Measles and Rubella! Get vaccinated!
- Are your defenses ready? Get vaccinated!
- Go on the offense: Get vaccinated!

*"Vaccination Week in the Americas has been instrumental in our region's becoming the first in the world to eliminate measles and rubella," said PAHO Director Carissa F. Etienne. "These viruses continue to circulate in other regions of the world. The risk of reintroduction of these diseases is especially high during mass-attendance events such as the 2014 World Cup. Getting vaccinated against measles and rubella is your best shot to protect yourself, your family and all the people of the Americas."*

**Production of Materials**

Stickers and one version of the poster "Vaccination: Your best shot!" were printed in four languages (Creole, English, Portuguese, and Spanish) and shipped to all Member States prior to VWA for distribution to the local level. Additional posters designs for each of the sub-slogans were available for download on the VWA website under the tab 'Campaign Kit.'

As part of the 2014 VWA campaign, three popular soccer players from Brazil and Argentina were also recruited to appear in a series of public service announcements (PSAs) which urged people to get vaccinated to protect themselves and their families from more than 20 dangerous diseases. The PSAs featured Juan Silveira Santos, "Dida" Néelson de Jesús e Silva and Andrés D'Alessandro of Brazil's Sport Club International soccer team.



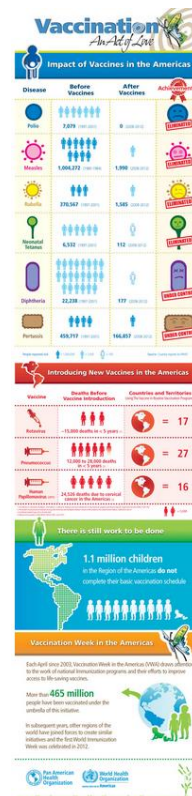


The VWA website was updated in 2014 and offered a description of the initiative, historical archives of previous years' campaigns, previous years' final reports, planning materials, country action plans, photo albums, videos, current campaign materials (e.g.: posters, stickers, infographics, etc.), and links to press releases.

This year, the VWA website saw a 25% increase in activity in the months leading up to VWA (January – April) compared with 2013. Much of the increase can likely be credited to increased social media messages with links back to the website. This was also the most successful year for the presence of VWA on social media. In addition to sending out more messages than previous years, new hashtags #GetVax, #BestShot, and WHO's hashtag #RUCovered were used to increase visibility on Twitter and Facebook.

PAHO/WHO operates separate Twitter accounts for English and Spanish and one combined account for Facebook. This year, 19 messages were tweeted in English to 18,600 followers, and 79 messages were tweeted in Spanish to 28,200 followers. A total of 20 messages on VWA were also sent out on Facebook reaching 174,131 people. One post sharing an infographic on the impact of vaccines in the Americas reached 38,000 people on Facebook and received the most re-tweets on Twitter. Key partners retweeted messages throughout the campaign, including the CDC, WHO and journalists.

In addition to pre-planned messages, real-time updates on country activities, including launching events, press releases, and photos were also shared on social media.



**#getvax**  
**#vacúnate**  
**#mejorjugada**  
**#bestshot**

**What's a hashtag?**

Definition: The # symbol, called a hashtag, is used to mark keywords or topics in a Tweet. All tweets that use the same hashtag are grouped together. This allows one to follow all of the conversation regarding a particular topic.

Press Coverage

In 2014, PAHO headquarters and communication officers in PAHO country offices sent out media advisories and press releases and coordinated press conferences and interviews with technical officers. In addition to press releases regarding VWA activities, a press release was also issued calling on travelers, particularly those who planned to attend the World Cup in June and July, to make sure they were up-to-date on their vaccines and, if not, to get vaccinated against measles and rubella at least two weeks before traveling.

**This year more than 180 news stories on VWA were issued in over 29 countries.**

Major international television channels that ran stories on the initiative included EFE, UNIVISION, Centro de Informacion de Naciones Unidas (CINU), CNN Español, ABC Español, Radio Francia Internacional and Yahoo Sports (Deportes), among others.

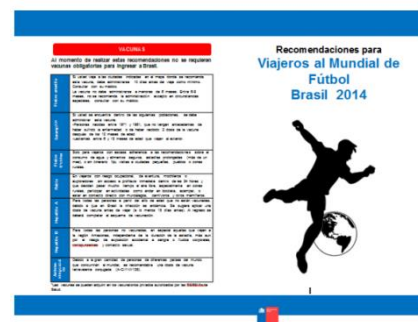


PAHO Director, Dr. Etienne being interviewed in Uruguay

National Communication Activities

In addition to the regional communication and press activities, countries each undertook their own national communication activities in celebration of VWA, by making use of (or adapting) regional slogans and materials, or developing more specialized campaigns and materials based on particular national efforts. Some examples include:

- A vaccination-themed coloring book for children was developed by Anguilla.
- Barbados held a mass media campaign utilizing television and print media to increase immunization awareness, reaching an estimated 125,000 people.
- Bolivia held a social communication campaign sending out vaccination messages via radio and local television stations, in Spanish, and in native languages of Quechua, and Aymara.
- Bonaire held a radio campaign to sensitize parents and the general public on vaccination issues.
- Canada implemented its sister initiative [National Immunization Awareness Week \(NIIW\)](#)
- Chile distributed brochures to those traveling outside the country on general recommendations for travelers attending the World Cup in Brazil.



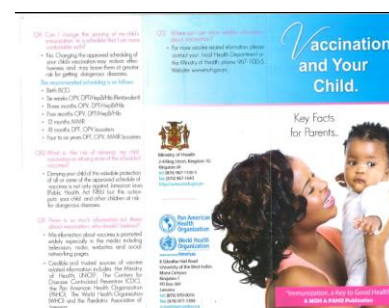
Chile, VWA 2014



El Salvador, VWA 2014

- St. Lucia used electronic and print media to sensitize stakeholders on HPV vaccine introduction.
- El Salvador developed a PSA featuring the minister of health country and two football/soccer players.
- Jamaica's goal during VWA 2014 was to improve the confidence of parents in the immunization program and to emphasize the importance of the vaccination record.

Towards this end, thirteen parent sensitization workshops were carried out nationwide, reaching 415 parents. The health teams also reached 4,747 other parents for education and sensitization through the clinics. A brochure entitled



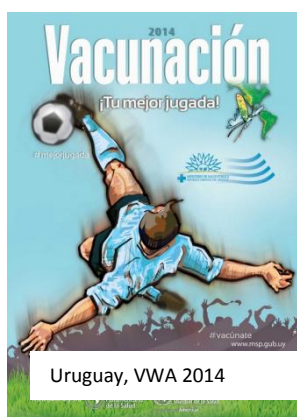
Brochure for parents produced in Jamaica, 2014



## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

“Vaccination & your child – Key facts for parents” was also developed and 66,000 copies were distributed.

- Nicaragua implemented a mass communication campaign which focused on the elimination of measles and rubella and emphasized the risk of disease transmission during mass events and the need to be immunized. Materials produced and distributed included flyers, brochures and banners, as well as messages for radio.
- In Puerto Rico, the project “Vaccination Promoters” (Promotores de Vacunación”) was launched, which is designed to provide guidance to government workers, students and community leaders regarding the importance of vaccination throughout life. The idea was that these individuals can then in turn spread the word in their communities regarding the power of vaccines.
- Paraguay and Uruguay were among several countries who adapted the regional poster designs to fit the colors of their national team.



Suriname used outreach activities and mass media messages to promote family immunization and HPV vaccination. They also used mass media to stimulate use of MMR and yellow fever vaccines for travelers going to the World Cup..

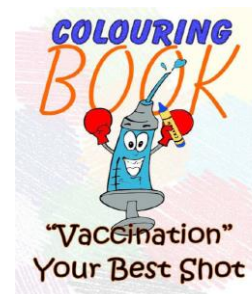
- The United States implemented the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its sister initiative [National Infant Immunization Week \(NIIW\)](#).



Images from television spot, Paraguay



April 26 to May 3, 2014 [immunize.ca](http://immunize.ca)



Anguilla



Brazil

### Launching Events

The regional launch of VWA 2014 took place in Montevideo, Uruguay, on 26 April. Participants included PAHO's Director Carissa F. Etienne, the minister of health of Uruguay, other national health officials, representatives of the Organization of American States (OAS), the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), U.N. Women, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the GAVI Alliance, and the U.N. Resident Coordinator in Uruguay.



National events also took place throughout the week in countries including Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay, Saint Maarten and Venezuela, among many others. Binational launches also occurred in border areas such as those between Honduras and Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, Uruguay and Argentina, Argentina and Chile, Panama and Costa Rica, Peru and Ecuador, Colombia and Panama, Guyana and Suriname and Guyana and Brazil, among others.



Images from the 2014 regional VWA launch in Montevideo, Uruguay

### A closer look at a selection of VWA national and bi-national launches:

Paraguay launched their national vaccination campaign against measles and rubella in Asunción on Monday, 21 April 2014, with the presence of the President of the Republic of Paraguay, Mr. Horacio Cartes, the country's vice president, the minister of health, PAHO/WHO's representative in Paraguay, the president of the International Expert Committee for the documentation of the verification of the elimination of measles, rubella and congenital rubella syndrome (IEC), members of the Paraguayan legislature, the mayor of the city of Luque and other authorities. The event was held at the South American Football Confederation.



VWA, Asuncion, Paraguay

Cuba launched VWA on 25 April in the municipality of San José de La Lajas. Professor Miguel Angel Galindo, founder of the Vaccination Program in Cuba, spoke on the historical significance and impact of the vaccination program in Cuba. Children from the community enacted a scene regarding the importance of childhood vaccination.



VWA, Cuba

## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

Honduras held its national launching event on 28 April with the participation of the minister of health and other national authorities, PAHO's Deputy Director, CDC, the Sabin Institute and other partners.



VWA, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

A binational children's soccer launch was celebrated between Argentina and Uruguay on April 27<sup>th</sup> in Salto, Uruguay. This was combined with a binational ceremony and symbolic vaccinations to launch VWA along this border.



VWA, Salto, Uruguay/Concordia, Argentina

A ceremonial event was held in Petionville, Haiti, a commune and suburb of Port-au-Prince during VWA 2014 to announce the upcoming introduction of rotavirus vaccine into the national schedule.



VWA, Haiti

Guyana and Suriname came together for a joint VWA launch in Boskamp, Suriname, an isolated fishing village with a large number of persons of Guyanese heritage and strong ties to Guyana. Participants in the event included the minister of health of Guyana, other senior officials from the ministries of health of both countries, directors of the Regional Health Services in Guyana and the Medical Mission in Suriname, UNICEF and PAHO.



VWA, Suriname

The president of Guatemala, Otto Pérez Molina inaugurated VWA 2014 during a launching event held on 9 May in the municipality of San Antonio Ilotenango in the department of Quiché.



VWA, Guatemala

El Salvador held a launch in the Municipality of Suchitoto, in the department of Cuscatlán on 30 April with participation of high ranking authorities including the minister of health, the governor of the department, the mayor of the municipality, and representatives from PAHO, UNICEF, JICA and USAID.



VWA, El Salvador

## Summary of Country Vaccination Campaigns

Despite the diverse array of activities which take place under the umbrella of VWA, most country efforts can be categorized according to the three strategic areas of PAHO's Regional Immunization Vision and Strategy (RIVS): namely efforts to (1) protect the achievements, (2) complete the unfinished agenda, or (3) confront new challenges.

<b>Protecting the Achievements</b>	Eradicating Polio
	Eliminating Measles, Rubella and Congenital Rubella Syndrome (CRS)
	Completing childhood immunization schedules
	Maintaining hepatitis B and pertussis control
<b>Completing the Unfinished Agenda</b>	Protecting occupational risk groups
	Reducing risk of seasonal influenza and yellow fever
	Eliminating maternal and neonatal tetanus
<b>Confronting New Challenges</b>	Introducing new vaccines such as rotavirus, pneumococcal and human papilloma virus
	Increasing use of VWA as a platform for integrated activities
	Strengthening of occupational capacity and infrastructure

## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

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Due to the depth, breadth and overlapping nature of many country efforts, the following section is not a comprehensive summary of VWA results, but instead a sampling of some of countries' achievements during the 2014 initiative. Specific quantitative results of individuals vaccinated and antigens administered can be found in Tables 1 and 2. All data are based on country reports submitted to PAHO's regional headquarters prior to 3 December 2014.

### 1. Protecting the achievements: polio eradication, measles, rubella and CRS elimination, completion of vaccination schedules, and hepatitis B and pertussis control

- Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Venezuela were among the countries that took advantage of VWA 2014 to implement campaigns to indiscriminately vaccinate children against **polio**.
  - The Dominican Republic targeted 100% of children less than 3 years of age for vaccination (628,304) during a national campaign which ran from 22 April to 30 May. The country reached 84% of their original goal (529,732). Challenges encountered included the concurrent outbreak of Chikungunya virus and the need for health care workers to also eliminate the breeding sites for the mosquito vector, which complicated house-to-house vaccination efforts.
  - Nicaragua administered an additional dose of oral polio vaccine to children aged less than 5 years. In total the country vaccinated 697,425 children, surpassing their pre-established goal (102.4%)
  - In Venezuela, VWA was incorporated into the national follow-up campaign against both polio (children aged 2 months-5 years) and measles/rubella (children aged 1-5 years), during which an additional dose of vaccine was provided to both target groups. Strategies utilized included institution-based vaccination (with extended hours), school vaccination, community outreach and the involvement of local organizations and leaders to help refer children (especially those not in school) towards the nearest health clinic, and the vaccination of indigenous communities in pre-selected areas. In total, health workers administered 3,021,690 doses of polio vaccine and 2,511,076 doses of MMR. Crossed rapid coverage monitoring (RCM) was also employed to assess the campaign's reach and to adjust strategies when needed.
- Chile, Dominica, Honduras, Montserrat, Panama, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela were among the countries that focused on **measles and rubella vaccination** efforts as part of VWA, and in line with the 2014 regional theme, targeting groups such as travelers and children.
  - In Dominica, a mop up campaign targeted children aged 1-3 years for their 2<sup>nd</sup> MMR dose. Rapid house-to-house monitoring of vaccination status was carried out in all 52 health center catchment areas, which showed coverage >95%. Administrative coverage reached 75% (children aged 12 months) and 61% (children aged 18 months to 3 years). Challenges included the outbreak of Chikungunya virus and the use of multi-dose vials for small populations.
  - One aspect of Honduras' VWA celebration focused on vaccinating travelers heading to the World Cup to see their national team play; in total, 4,217 individuals were vaccinated before they left for Brazil (46% of the pre-established goal).
  - In Panama, children aged 1-4 years were targeted for their second dose of MMR vaccine. Panama recently moved forward the timing of this dose to 18 months, resulting in the need to catch up children already passed this age.
  - VWA in Paraguay was celebrated during the first week of the national vaccination campaign against measles, mumps and rubella, during which all children aged less than 6

years of age were targeted for an additional dose of MMR. Vaccination strategies included institutional-based vaccination, vaccination posts in the community and house-to-house vaccination brigades. Implementation challenges including torrential rains and flooding; these were among the factors which resulted in the extension of the campaign until 15 July. In total 533,889 children (72.3% of initial target) were reached.



Images from the national campaign against measles, mumps and rubella in Paraguay

- As part of VWA 2014 efforts in Uruguay, adults aged 27-49 years and travelers were vaccinated for MMR vaccination if they were unable to provide evidence of having previously received 2 doses of vaccine.
- Ten Latin American countries took advantage of VWA 2014 to intensify activities of the routine national immunization programs and systematically administer multiple **antigens to update and/or complete the vaccination schedules of children less than 5 years of age**. Countries frequently prioritized children living in hard-to-reach areas, including rural and border zones, and in indigenous communities. Strategies utilized included institutionalized vaccination with extended hours of operation of health centers and intensified social mobilization, fixed and mobile vaccination posts, and vaccination brigades traveling house-to-house. Specific examples of country results include:
  - In Brazil, VWA occurs each year simultaneously with the country's Vaccination Month for Indigenous Communities; a logistically intensive effort to reach indigenous communities in geographically remote locales by air, land or river, and start, update and/or complete vaccination schedules. In 2014, 34 indigenous health districts were targeted and 3,500 health workers were involved, administering 17 different vaccines. In total 4,120 children less than 1 year of age; 20,700 children aged 1-4 years; 39,200 women of childbearing ages; and 10,200 elderly individuals were vaccinated according to their individual immunization schedules.
  - El Salvador, part of VWA efforts were dedicated to improving coverage with all vaccines in the routine program for children less than 5 years of age (BCG, rotavirus, pentavalent, polio, MMR, DPT and pneumococcal conjugate vaccines).
  - In Honduras, 2014 marked their 34<sup>th</sup> National Vaccination Campaign, long predating the creation of VWA. Based on pre-established vaccination targets, the country achieved global coverage of 88% coverage for BCG, 79% for 1st, 2nd and 3rd



VWA in Brazil

- doses of OPV, 78% for 1st, 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup> doses of pentavalent and pneumococcal vaccines, 74% for first and second doses of rotavirus and 93% coverage for MMR. Challenges were encountered however, updating the delayed schedules of children aged 1-4 years due to over-estimated targets and difficulties in obtaining accurate population denominators.
- Mexico's comprehensive Second National Health Week aligns with VWA each year and is celebrated under its framework. In 2014, Mexico implemented multiple activities, including completing basic childhood schedules (BCG, pentavalent, hepatitis B, MMR, rotavirus, pneumococcal conjugate vaccine) and administering booster doses (DPT and MR). Additionally, children aged 6-59 months were vaccinated against polio, adolescents in 5<sup>th</sup> grade (or at age 11 if not in school) received the HPV vaccine and pregnant women were vaccinated with Td or Tdap vaccines, all at the national level.
  - In Nicaragua, efforts to complete childhood schedules under the framework of VWA were completed early (24-30 March), followed by a week of catch-up vaccination. In total 13,819 health care workers participated in the effort and 8,277 vaccination posts were opened nationwide. Based on pre-established goals, the country achieved high coverage with pentavalent, (109.6%), rotavirus (97.7%) and pneumococcal conjugate (95.5%) vaccines.
  - Panama also celebrated VWA early, beginning in late March. The national slogan "Vaccination goals are our best defense" (Los goles en la vacunacion son nuestra mejor defensa) played off the regional theme. Panama focused on completing schedules of populations across the age spectrum in priority areas in 14 regions. Vaccination was done in the community via fixed and mobile posts in locations with high population concentrations, such as nursing homes, day care centers, public and private businesses and in waiting rooms. In three regions (Panama City, San Miguelito y Nogbe Bugle), house-to-house vaccination was carried out. Health care workers from both the public and private sectors were mobilized for this effort.
- In 11 countries and territories of the English, Dutch and French-speaking Caribbean efforts were undertaken **to complete schedules and offer booster doses to school-aged children and other age groups**. Some examples include:
    - In Anguilla, school-aged children were given their 3<sup>rd</sup> DT and polio boosters and mop-up vaccination was carried out at health centers for children aged 0-5 years and the elderly.
    - In Bahamas, a list of immunization defaulters was submitted for airing on the community announcements broadcasts through the National Public Radio stations. Nurses also increased their home visits and telephone calls to track down those children pending doses.
    - In Belize, VWA efforts were diverse and included completing schedules of children less than 5 years, school-based vaccination of children aged 5-15 years, vaccination mop-up via home visits and satellite clinics and vaccination of individuals in tourist destinations (tour guides and hotel personnel) and in the northern and western border areas (including border personnel). As a result of VWA, Belize reported an increase in coverage of 15% for the 3<sup>rd</sup> dose of polio and pentavalent vaccine among children aged less than 1 year. Additionally vaccination coverage for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> doses of MMR vaccine increased by 2% and 3% respectively, among children aged 1 and 2 years
    - In Bermuda, VWA activities focused on public health education via the radio and print media, public announcements and clinic bulletin boards. An open vaccination day was also held. Target population included adults traveling to the World Cup, vaccine refusers and parents of children that had defaulted with their vaccination schedule.

Of note, there were anecdotal reports of increased attendance at travel health clinics in response to VWA educational efforts, most notably by men.

- In the Cayman Islands, efforts were made to immunize 4 and 5 year old children who had missed their 2<sup>nd</sup> MMR and 2<sup>nd</sup> booster DTap+IPV doses.
- In Guyana, outreach vaccination sessions were conducted across the country in schools, orphanages, children’s homes, nursery and primary schools, work places and house-to-house. Health centers also offered vaccinations to drop-ins.

**2. Completing the unfinished agenda: improving vaccination coverage against seasonal influenza, yellow fever, and maternal and neonatal tetanus in high-risk, isolated, border, and indigenous populations, and protection of occupational risk groups**

- Countries including Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Paraguay and Uruguay, were among those who took advantage of the timing of VWA 2014 to implement vaccination campaigns against **seasonal influenza** in preparation for increased viral circulation during their winter seasons.



Promotion for influenza vaccination during a football/soccer match in Chile during VWA 2014

- This year marked Brazil’s 15th annual influenza vaccination campaign. The country reported the vaccination of more than 43 million individuals, including 17.97 million elderly adults, 549,074 people in indigenous communities, 2.22 million pregnant and post partum women, 3.94 million health care workers, 10.71 million children, 7.36 million individuals with chronic disease and 381,677 prisoners. Coverage ranged from 83.75% (pregnant women) to greater than 100% (post partum women).
- During VWA 2014, Ecuador implemented the second phase of their seasonal influenza campaign, targeting children aged 6 months to 4 years, older adults, health workers, individuals with chronic illness and pregnant women. Strategies employed included vaccination upon demand, vaccination brigades, vaccination in micro-concentrations and house-to-house vaccination in densely crowded areas. Vaccination was also done in health and recreation centers in order to reach older adults and populations with chronic illness. Vaccination during VWA provided an important boost to overall coverage with the influenza vaccine, as seen in the below table.

Children < 4 years*					
Total population (national)	Number vaccinated November-March	% Coverage	Number vaccinated during VWA	% increase in coverage	Total coverage
1,518,636	832,561	54.8%	330,161	22.0%	76.6%
Adults >65 years					
Total population (national)	Number vaccinated November-March	% Coverage	Number vaccinated during VWA	% increase in coverage	Total coverage
1,077,075	408,798	38%	288,845	26.8%	64.8%
Individuals with chronic illness**					
Total population	Number vaccinated	% Coverage	Number vaccinated	% increase in coverage	Total coverage



## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

(national)	November-March		during VWA	coverage	
508,011	440,702	87%	204,770	40%	127%
<b>Health workers**</b>					
Total population (national)	Number vaccinated November-March	% Coverage	Number vaccinated during VWA	% increase in coverage	Total coverage
66,285	51,286	77.4%	12,386	19.0%	96.1%
<b>Pregnant women***</b>					
Total population (national)	Number vaccinated as of March	% Coverage	Number vaccinated during VWA	% increase in coverage	Total coverage
427,005	130,838	30.6%	19,217	4.5%	35.1%
<b>School children (aged 5-17 years)</b>					
Total population (national)	Number vaccinated November-March	% Coverage	Number vaccinated during VWA	% increase in coverage	Total coverage
3,910,414	1,693,935	43.3%	123,331	3.2	46.4%

\*Coverage was measured taking into account the administration of 2 doses of vaccine.

\*\* The population denominator for individuals with chronic disease and health workers was not considered reliable for the calculation of coverage.

\*\*\* Pregnant women were added as a priority group for vaccination during VWA (1 month) but were not included in the first phase of the campaign.

- **Prevention of maternal and neonatal tetanus through the vaccination of women of childbearing age (WCBA) against tetanus/diphtheria (Td)** was part of the focus of several countries' efforts including El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.
  - El Salvador vaccinated both women and men aged 10-60 years with Td vaccine, administering almost 21,000 doses. A total of 1,809 pregnant women received their first dose of Td as part of this effort.
  - Honduras vaccinated women aged 11, 21-22 years and pregnant women with the Td vaccine. Of note, the country administered 19,012 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> doses of Td vaccine to pregnant women (9,613 1<sup>st</sup> doses), starting, updating and completing schedules to prevent maternal and neonatal tetanus. An additional 2,672 pregnant women received 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> doses of Td.
- **Outreach vaccination targeting population groups at risk of preventable disease due to their occupation** was also undertaken in countries and territories including Belize (tourism and border patrol workers), Bolivia (health workers), Montserrat, (construction workers), Panama and Trinidad and Tobago (life guards, health workers, forestry, environmental and industrial workers, staff at metal industries, school principals and teachers, among others).

### 3. Confronting new challenges: introducing new vaccines, strengthening of occupational capacity and infrastructure and using VWA as a platform for integrated interventions

- As part of VWA 2014, Antigua and Barbuda finalized a draft proposal on cervical cancer prevention during a half-day workshop. This proposal is being reviewed and used as a guide for the Ministry of Health's policy on **vaccine introduction**. In Trinidad and Tobago, HPV vaccine was introduced into the national schedule in late 2012, but during VWA 2014, activities included targeting both adolescent and adult men (aged 11-26 years) and women (11-45 years) with HPV. In Haiti, VWA provided the backdrop for a ceremony announcing the upcoming introduction of rotavirus vaccine into the national schedule.

- Strengthening of occupational capacity and infrastructure
  - Several countries held training workshops for health care workers in order to **increase the knowledge and occupational capacity of their immunization program workforce** including: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Montserrat and St. Lucia. Many topics were included across the different islands, including norms and standards of the immunization program and HPV introduction, where applicable.





Health care worker training during VWA in Bahamas, 2014


- Many countries have a history of **integrating other preventative health interventions as a part of VWA**. In 2014, 13 countries and territories continued to expand upon the use of VWA as a platform for integration.

<p><b>Belize</b></p>	<p>Belize administered 21,303 doses of Albendazole (deworming) and 20,316 doses of vitamin A supplementation to children aged 5-15 years. In one district, 560 doses of iron and folic acid were given to women aged 10-49 years. Five districts also held health fairs during VWA where nutrition counseling, health screening and vector control activities were included.</p>
<p><b>Barbados</b></p>	<p>The Ministry of Health of Barbados, in cooperation with PAHO held two community outreach events during VWA. In addition to vaccination, 149 individuals were reached with an additional intervention, including demonstrations and instruction on breast self examinations, screening for non-communicable diseases (diabetic foot screening, blood sugar and blood pressure). Information was also distributed on reproductive health, domestic violence, vector-borne disease (including chikungunya), child health and chronic diseases.</p>
<p><b>Bolivia</b></p>	<p>In Bolivia, deworming, vitamin A and other micronutrients, health screening and education were all integrated into the VWA campaign in La Paz.</p>
<p><b>Brazil</b></p>	<p>As part of Brazil's Vaccination Month for Indigenous Communities, a diverse array of medical and laboratory services were also delivered to indigenous communities, in addition to vaccination. They included prenatal testing; rapid testing for HIV, hepatitis B and C; evaluations of nutritional status; vitamin A supplementation; health education; post partum, medical and psychological check-ups; dental checks; treatment for onchocerciasis and deworming, among others.</p>

## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

<p><b>Dominican Republic</b></p>  <p>Mr. René Jacques, Director of Student Wellbeing in the Ministry of Education in the Dominican Republic oversees a student taking a deworming tablet.</p>	<p>A total of 1,625,800 doses of deworming medication were administered to individuals aged 6-14 years during VWA 2014, a cooperative effort between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic. VWA also coincided with the outbreak of Chikungunya on the island, so some health regions integrated VWA vaccination efforts into those to support Chikungunya control.</p>
<p><b>Honduras</b></p>  <p>A promotional poster for deworming efforts in Honduras, "We live happily without worms"</p>	<p>Honduras dewormed 334,623 preschool aged children (2-4 years) at the national level. As part of this effort, 518 deworming RCM were carried out in 20 health regions, the results of which were used to adjust strategies. 11,509 children in the target group had been dewormed two weeks prior to VWA as part of a school health program and through the work of an NGO; due to national norms, these children were not retreated. Including both rounds of deworming, Honduras reached 70% of its initial target goal; coverage in the health regions ranged from 36% to &gt;95%. The country also supplemented children aged 6 months-4 years and postpartum women (less than 30 days) with vitamin A, administering 16,450 doses to children aged 6-11 months, 211,884 to children aged 1-4 years and 8,519 doses to postpartum women, achieving 15%, 24% and 46% of their pre-established goals, respectively. Lastly, information was provided to caregivers of children aged less than 5 years regarding the early detection of eye cancer (Retinoblastoma).</p>
<p><b>Mexico</b></p>	<p>Mexico distributed oral rehydration packets to mothers and caregivers of children less than 5 years of age who came into contact with health services. The country also reinforced the supplementation of vitamins and minerals, iron and folic acid to populations at-risk, and educated mothers and caregivers of children less than 5 years of age regarding the prevention of diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections, at home management of these illnesses and the identification of warning signs.</p>
<p><b>Montserrat</b></p>	<p>BMI screening was carried out for children aged 8-9 in school.</p>
<p><b>Nicaragua</b></p>	<p>Nicaragua integrated both deworming and vitamin A supplementation into VWA 2014, administering 1,745,730 doses of the former to children aged 2-12 years (96% of the pre-established goal) and 746,977 of the later to children aged 6 months- 6 years (99% of the pre-established goal).</p>
<p><b>Panama</b></p>	<p>At the subnational level, 1,931 doses of vitamin A were distributed to children aged 1 year during a health fair. Additionally, 244 blood pressures were taken, 114 vision tests were administered (together with distribution of glasses) and 217 breast exams were carried out. In one health region, 1,320 nutritional supplements were distributed.</p>

## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

<b>St. Lucia</b>	In St. Lucia, as part of efforts to provide hepatitis B booster doses to secondary school students, general health education, BMI and vision screening were also integrated into school-based efforts. Immunization was also integrated into a workplace wellness activity which was held in both public and private sector organizations on the island.
<b>St. Maarten</b>  An image from the bike-a-thon in St. Maarten, VWA 2014	During VWA, St. Maarten carried out dental outreach, serving 19 children, 2 of whom were referred for further care due to severe problems. In addition to fluoride applications, information was also distributed on oral health. A bike-a-thon was held on the Dutch side of the island with the participation of 40 children, including some children from the island's French side.
<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>	Trinidad and Tobago included health screening for blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol and BMI testing as part of VWA 2014.

## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

**Table 1.** People Vaccinated, by Target Population and Country or Territory, VWA 2014\*

Country	0-12 months	1-4 years	<5 years	> 5 to 18 years	WCBA's Td	>60 years influenza	Adult MR/MMR	High risk occupations	Others	TOTAL
Anguilla	4	80		205						289
Antigua & Barbuda										
Argentina										
Aruba										
Bahamas										
Barbados <sup>1</sup>			14	3					229	246
Belize <sup>2</sup>	68	307	1,211						1,432	3,018
Bermuda										
BES Islands (Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba)										
Bolivia										
Brazil <sup>3</sup>	4,120	20,700	10,708,630			17,966,091		3,942,196	10,558,415	43,200,152
British Virgin Islands										
Canada	National Immunization Awareness Week									
Cayman Islands			58							58
Chile										
Colombia										
Costa Rica										
Cuba										
Curaçao										
Dominica	617	754								1,371
Dominican Rep.			529,732	467,641						997,373
Ecuador <sup>4</sup>			330,161	123,331		288,845		12,386	223,987	978,710
El Salvador <sup>5</sup>	38,871	243,530		1,588	15,902	407,251		15,762	63,195	786,099
Grenada										
Guatemala										
Guyana	Disaggregated data by age and target group was not available for all regions in Guyana.									
Haiti										
Honduras <sup>6</sup>	51,911	53,887	57,762		45,643		4,217		6,569	219,989
Jamaica										
Mexico										
Montserrat <sup>7</sup>							57	106	69	232

## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

Country	0-12 months	1-4 years	<5 years	> 5 to 18 years	WCBA's Td	>60 years influenza	Adult MR/MMR	High risk occupations	Others	TOTAL
Nicaragua			697,425		699,826					1,397,251
Panama	3,950	11,039		15,704	21,762	3,431		5,247		61,133
Paraguay <sup>8</sup>			533,889							533,889
Peru										
St. Kitts and Nevis										
St. Lucia <sup>9</sup>			31	192				124	780	1,127
St. Maarten			40	55						95
St Vincent and the Grenadines										
Suriname			826							826
Turks and Caicos										
Trinidad & Tobago									2,064	2,064
United States	National Infant Immunization Week									
Uruguay <sup>10</sup>			4,330			29,994	674	2,564	1,784	39,346
Venezuela <sup>11</sup>			3,021,690							3,021,690
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>95,421</b>	<b>330,297</b>	<b>15,885,799</b>	<b>608,719</b>	<b>783,133</b>	<b>18,695,612</b>	<b>4,948</b>	<b>3,978,385</b>	<b>10,858,524</b>	<b>51,240,838</b>

1. Adults >18 years vaccinated with Td and Influenza vaccine during outreach and adults >17 years vaccinated with varicella in tertiary education institutions.

2. 1,432 "adults" were vaccinated who live in high risk areas such as tourist destinations, the northern and western border areas .

3. "Others" in Brazil are populations vaccinated against influenza, including: pregnant women (1,825,131); post partum women (397,623); indigenous populations (549,074); individuals with chronic illness (7,355,510); prisoners (381,677) AND indigenous women of childbearing ages and elderly adults, where type of vaccine was not specified.

4. In Ecuador, "Other" refers to pregnant women and individuals with chronic disease who were vaccinated against seasonal influenza

5. "Other" refers to vaccination of men aged 10-50 with Td, vaccination of pregnant women and other groups aged 19-59 with seasonal influenza.

6. In Honduras "Other" were additional, non-identified groups vaccinated with Td vaccine (not WCBA's)

7. "Others" in Montserrat are individuals vaccinated with Td vaccine whose profile was not identified.

8. In Paraguay the category of "<5years" includes children <6years.

9. "Others" in St. Lucia are populations >19 years vaccinated against Hepatitis B (MMR2, Td, polio and influenza were also applied)

10. "Others" in Uruguay are pregnant women vaccinated with influenza vaccine, 464 individuals vaccinated through a mobile vaccination station from the "Comision Honoraria para la Luca Antituberculosa y Enfermedades Prevalentes (CHLA-EP) (influenza, measles and all the vaccines in the national schedule) and 478 persons vaccinated during a vaccination outreach event in Montevideo.

11. Results from Venezuela are from the full implementation of their measles/rubella and polio campaigns which were extended over the course of 10 weeks.

## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

**Table 2.** Number of Doses Administered by Antigen and Country or Territory, VWA 2014\*

Country	MMR	MR	DTP	DT	Td	TT	Hib	Hep B	Penta	Polio	BCG	YF	Influenza	Rota	Pneumo	HPV	Varicella	Other
Anguilla	63		70	5				2	4	83			6				39	
Antigua & Barbuda																		
Argentina																		
Aruba																		
Bahamas																		
Barbados	10		5		80					5			59				92	
Belize	1,215		863		2,522			129	751	1,098	292		370					
Bermuda																		
BES Islands (Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba)																		
Bolivia																		
Brazil <sup>1</sup>	2,152		1,721		2,991			1,815	2,790	3,661	463	2,306	43,125,933		3,352	2,384	1,636	1,776
British Virgin Islands																		
Canada	National Immunization Awareness Week																	
Cayman Islands	58																58	
Chile																		
Colombia																		
Costa Rica																		
Cuba																		
Curaçao																		
Dominica	1,215																	
Dominican Rep.			93,720		466,828					529,732								
Ecuador													978,707					
El Salvador <sup>2</sup>	7,272		3,540	356	20,983			946	16,185	20,297	3,375	199	765,116	7,794	11,519		542	
Grenada																		
Guatemala																		
Guyana <sup>3</sup>	1,328		643	548	1,112			399		24		2,594				530		
Haiti																		
Honduras	17,583	4,217	52,220		109,974			6,725	43,324	68,027	10,407			26,279	42,607			
Jamaica																		
Mexico																		

## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

Country	MMR	MR	DTP	DT	Td	TT	Hib	Hep B	Penta	Polio	BCG	YF	Influenza	Rota	Pneumo	HPV	Varicella	Other
Montserrat	57				175													
Nicaragua	29,087		109,122		699,826				63,641	697,425				53,770	223,755			
Panama <sup>4</sup>	4,777		11,045		21,522			4,667	1,071	3,398	48	27	2,878	711	4,458	4,160	105	35,318
Paraguay		533,889																
Peru																		
St. Kitts and Nevis																		
St. Lucia	240		1	53	604			1,096		171			486				8	
St. Maarten <sup>5</sup>	24							14							9	9		37
St Vincent and the Grenadines																		
Suriname	Data not disaggregated by vaccine																	
Turks and Caicos																		
Trinidad & Tobago																		
United States	National Infant Immunization Week																	
Uruguay	683				21								57,621		2,289		1	
Venezuela	2,511,076									3,021,690								

1. In Brazil, "Other" refers to meningococcal C (1,748) and hepatitis A (28) vaccines

2. "Other" in El Salvador is the rabies vaccine

3. In total, Guyana administered 9,877 doses of vaccine.

4. In Panama, "Hep B" includes 4163 doses of Hepatitis A vaccine and 504 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine. Panama reported administering 35,318 additional doses of antigens including Td and influenza, but this information was non disaggregated.

5. "Other" refers to the DtaP+IPV vaccine; in St. Maarten, 21 doses of DT-polio vaccine were also administered



### Evaluation Efforts

Some countries and territories reported results based on VWA's standardized indicators, which were expanded in 2014. Examples include:

#### Indicators for the intensification of vaccination in at-risk areas

- ✓ Number and percentage of children 1-4 years of age that received their first, second, and third doses of DTP/ Pentavalent (to measure delayed vaccination schedules that were started, advanced or completed during VWA)
  - El Salvador: among children aged 1 to less than 5 years, 30 received their 1st dose of pentavalent vaccine, 66 received their 2nd, and 66 received their 3rd dose.
  - Honduras: 1,667 children received either their first, second or third dose of pentavalent during VWA.
  - Panama: 90 children (0.4%), 182 children (0.7%) and 430 children (1.3%) living in prioritized areas received their 1st, 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup> dose of pentavalent during VWA.
- ✓ Number and percentage of women of childbearing age (WCBA) who were vaccinated with the first dose of Td vaccine in at-risk municipalities
  - El Salvador: 1,998 pregnant women were vaccinated for the first time with Td vaccine
  - Honduras: 9,613 pregnant women were vaccinated for the first time with Td vaccine (55% of original target)
- ✓ Percentage of municipalities with plans for a second and third round of vaccination to complete schedules after VWA
  - In Barbados and Panama, 100% of municipalities had plans for additional rounds of vaccination
- ✓ Number of health workers that participated in VWA outreach activities
  - In St. Lucia, 100 health care workers participated.

#### Indicators for specific extramural campaigns

- ✓ Percentage of Rapid Coverage Monitoring (RCM) in which vaccination coverage for (measles-rubella, polio or another vaccine) is less than 95%
  - Honduras carried out 884 RCMs at the national level, 8% (68) showed coverage less than 95%, information which was used to readjust vaccination activities.

#### Indicators for surveillance

- ✓ Number of suspected cases of measles/rubella and acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) that were identified by active community search and that were already known by the system.
  - Panama: 0
  - St. Maarten: 0

#### Political priority indicators

- ✓ Number of authorities that participated in launching events (international, national, regional or local)
  - Panama, 58 national authorities, 84 regional authorities and 147 local authorities
- ✓ Number of community or religious leaders that supported the celebration of VWA

## Vaccination Week in the Americas 2014

- Panama: 19 religious leaders

### Training indicators

- ✓ Number of forums, seminars or conferences held during VWA
  - Panama: 1 national seminar, 14 regional seminars, 49 meetings reported at the local level
- ✓ Number of health workers that received training during VWA
  - Montserrat 14
  - Nicaragua: 13,819
  - Panama: 1,472
  - St. Lucia: 34

### Information dissemination and media indicators

- ✓ Percentage of people interviewed in previously selected areas who are aware of VWA;
  - Honduras: 1,359 mothers of children less than 5 years were interviewed; 87% (1182) had been informed previously about the campaign.
  - Panama: 95% (694/730)
- ✓ Number of VWA television spots that were broadcast on national or local television stations
  - Jamaica: 1 TV interview, 3 radio interviews and 2 print media features covering the importance of vaccination and vaccine legislation
  - St. Lucia: 10 radio/television appearances were made by Ministry of Health staff
- ✓ Number of radio announcements that were played on national or local channels
  - Belize: 4 radio and TV talks
  - Dominica: public service announcements played on 4 stations.
  - Panama: 2 national announcements, 14 regional announcements
- ✓ Number of journalists informed about the objectives and benefits of VWA
  - Panama: 8
  - St. Lucia: 5

### Intersectoral/Interinstitutional coordination indicators

- ✓ Number of meetings carried out by the VWA organizational committees
  - Nicaragua: 6
  - Panama: 1

### Conclusion

Throughout its history, VWA has evolved into an essential initiative to help countries strengthen their routine immunization program. In its 12<sup>th</sup> year however, VWA played a particularly key role in reinforcing public health preparations in the Americas prior to the 2014 World Cup. While a team from the Region did not take home the top prize at this sporting competition, the World Cup was a win for the Americas in that no large vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks were reported linked to the competition. Looking towards the future, it will be important that each year VWA continues to be reinvented, refreshed and used as a rallying force to help unite countries and territories of the Region to confront new public health challenges, while continuing to fortify the routine program.