

**PROTECT YOUR
COMMUNITY**
Do your part



Vaccination
WEEK
in the Americas 2019



| **#GetVax**

FINAL REPORT

PAHO



Pan American
Health
Organization



World Health
Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE
Americas

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Bringing people and countries
most precious
together to advance
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A Message from Director Etienne

Under VWA's 2019 multimedia strategic campaign, Director Carissa F. Etienne filmed an outreach video featuring visits with local area hospitals, health care workers and families, urging all to "Protect your community, do your part. Get vaccinated."



“We must protect our loved ones in our communities— it's a job for all of us... we have to do our part”



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The full video and others may be viewed here:
<https://www.paho.org/vwa/es/espanol-multimedia/>

Participating Countries and Territories 2019

Pictured below are the **35** countries and territories that submitted plans and/or final reports to PAHO, displayed in dark green

10 other countries and territories participated without sending reports (light green)



Reporting and Participating

Anguilla, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos, Uruguay, Venezuela

Non-Reporting and Participating

Antigua & Barbuda, Argentina, Aruba, BES Islands (Bonaire, St. Eustatius & Saba), Bolivia, Canada, Cayman Islands, Chile, Curaçao, United States

VWA 2019 Executive Summary

- ◆ From **April 20 to 27, 2019**, the Region of the Americas celebrated its **17th annual Vaccination Week in the Americas (VWA)** + the 8th World Immunization Week (WIW)
- ◆ The 2019 Regional Slogan was **“Protect your community. Do your part. #GetVax.”**
- ◆ **45** countries + territories participated, vaccinating over **65 million individuals**
- ◆ **22** countries administered over **450,000 doses against measles**
- ◆ **22** countries protected the achievement of **polio eradication**, including 3 national campaigns in Cuba, Dominican Republic, + Haiti, administering **1,625,255 doses**
- ◆ **19** countries used VWA 2019 to intensify activities of routine national immunization programs, administering multiple antigens to improve coverage by beginning, updating or **completing childhood vaccination schedules**
- ◆ As in previous years, Brazil executed its **massive influenza campaign**, successfully vaccinating over **59 million people**
- ◆ **13** other countries held influenza campaigns targeting various groups with the “southern hemisphere” formulation of the seasonal vaccine
- ◆ **16** countries utilized VWA as an opportunity to vaccinate **adolescents against HPV**, applying a total of **1,084,311 doses**
- ◆ **16** countries prioritized **health care workers** + other high-risk occupations
- ◆ **16** countries took special efforts to reach **vulnerable populations**, including pregnant + postpartum women, older adults, indigenous populations, individuals with chronic disease, sex workers, immigrants, travelers, + border communities
- ◆ **34** countries conducted outreach + **social mobilization activities**, including press releases, social media, radio, television, health fairs, and parades
- ◆ **19** countries held **integrated health interventions** in conjunction with VWA 2019, such as: Vitamin A + antiparasitic administration; education on the prevention of mosquito borne illnesses; health screens, including mental health + STIs; basic nursing + dental care; vaccination for pets; promotion of healthy eating habits; cancer awareness
- ◆ **11** countries conducted **monitoring + evaluation activities**, including the assessment of the public’s confidence + satisfaction with vaccination

- ◆ Since 2003, VWA has vaccinated over **806 million people of all ages.**

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Vaccination Week in the Americas: Background and History

VWA Origins

In response to the 2002 measles outbreak along the Venezuelan-Colombian border, Andean health ministers proposed the idea of a coordinated international vaccination campaign to prevent the further spread of the disease. With support from PAHO, this proposal evolved over the succeeding months into the effort now known as Vaccination Week in the Americas (VWA).

VWA was first celebrated in April 2003 with 19 countries and territories participating. Later that year the initiative was endorsed through a resolution during the 44th Directing Council of PAHO. Today, the initiative has matured into a hemispheric celebration of the power of vaccination and serves as a key annual opportunity for all countries of the Americas to highlight the essential work of their national immunization programs.

What is 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. 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 areas, border zones 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 at the forefront of the political agenda and in the media spotlight. VWA has become a bright example of what can happen when countries join together, across borders, cultures, and languages, to improve their populations’ health.

806
Million
Individuals have been
vaccinated since 2003*

*2019 estimates were used for Bahamas, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, and Peru, as results were pending at the time of publication

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Core Objectives

Participation in VWA has always been under a flexible framework. National activities are selected by ministries of health in accordance with current health priorities. The overarching objectives of VWA are to:

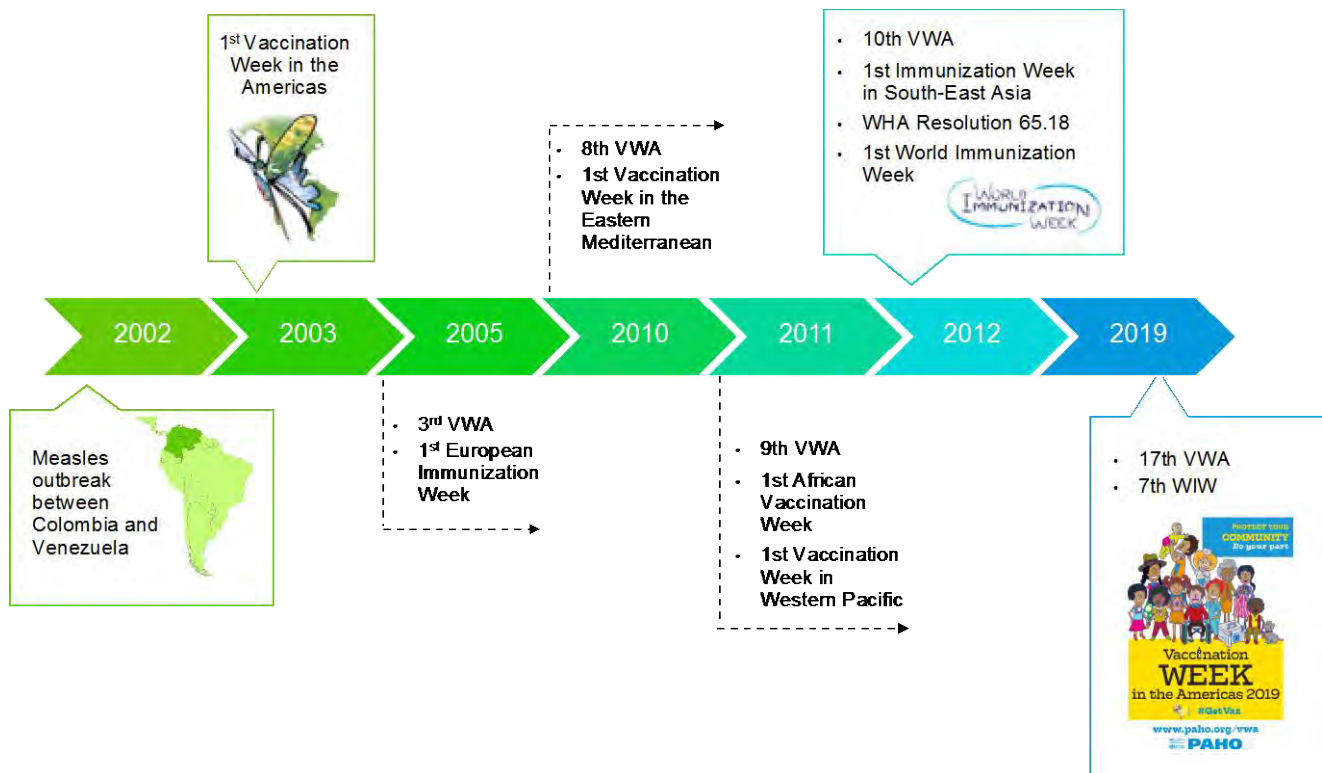
1. Promote equity and access to immunization
2. Promote the transition from child to family immunization
3. Maintain immunization on the political agenda
4. Increase vaccination coverage of all antigens
5. Serve as a platform for integrated activities

Regional Achievements

Over the years the region has become a globally recognized leader in eliminating disease through immunization:

- ◆ Smallpox (1971)
- ◆ Polio (1994)
- ◆ Rubella (2015)
- ◆ Congenital rubella syndrome (2015)
- ◆ Measles* (2016)
- ◆ Neonatal tetanus (2017)

*See page 9 for information regarding the current measles situation in the Americas



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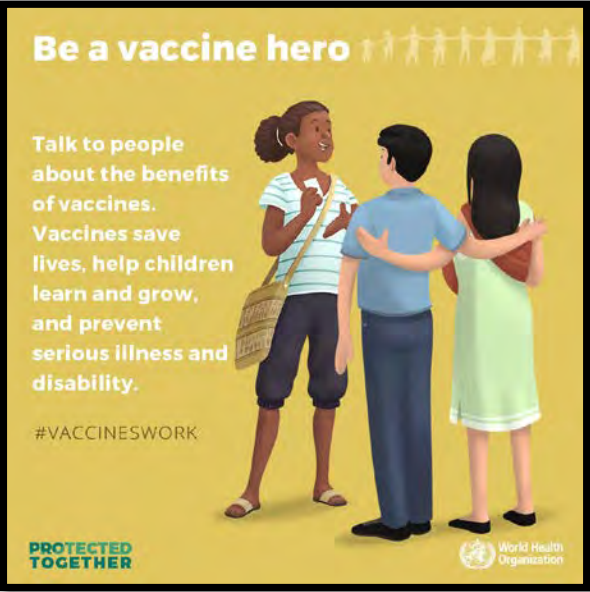
World Immunization Week

Following the early successes of the Americas in implementing VWA, other regions of the World Health Organization (WHO) have subsequently come on board with similar sister initiatives, each adapted to the realities of Member States. In 2012, this global movement culminated in the establishment of World Immunization Week (WIW, see timeline on previous page). Each year, WIW in conjunction with VWA have come together to raise awareness on the importance of immunization and to vaccinate different populations across the globe, making a special effort to reach people who may not have regular access to health services, including indigenous peoples, migrants, border populations, and people living in rural/urban fringes.

WIW was endorsed at the 65th World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2012 through Resolution 65.18 and is officially held during the last week of April each year.

WIW 2019

2019 marked WIW's 8th year. [WIW 2019](#) saw global partners unite under the theme "Protected Together: Vaccines Work!" The campaign celebrated Vaccine Heroes from around the world—from parents and community members to health workers and innovators—who help to ensure that we are all protected through the power of immunization.



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WIW Objectives

The main goal of the 2019 campaign is to raise awareness about the critical importance of full immunization throughout the life course. WHO and partners aim to:

- ◆ Demonstrate the value of vaccines for the health of children and communities and the world.
- ◆ Highlight the need to build on immunization progress while addressing gaps, including through increased investment.
- ◆ Show how routine immunization is the foundation for strong, resilient health systems and universal health coverage.

Vaccination Weeks Across the World

To learn more about regional vaccination weeks across the globe, visit the websites below:

- ◆ [African Vaccination Week](#)
- ◆ [Eastern Mediterranean Vaccination Week](#)
- ◆ [European Immunization Week](#)
- ◆ [South-East Asia Vaccination Week](#)
- ◆ [Vaccination Week in the Americas](#)
- ◆ [Western Pacific Vaccination Week](#)
- ◆ [World Immunization Week \(World Health Organization\)](#)

* * *

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VWA 2019—A Focus on Measles

Currently, the region is experiencing a growing number of measles outbreaks, despite the fact it was declared measles-free in 2016. Since 2017, the region has suffered from measles transmissions in 10 countries with more than 17,000 recorded cases. VWA 2019 provides an important opportunity for all actors in the region to Do Their Part to end the current measles outbreak, Protect Their Communities, and permanently eliminate the measles virus in the Americas.

Fast Facts

- ◆ The fact that a disease has been declared eliminated does not mean that it no longer exists. It simply means that it does not circulate in a specific area. Imported cases always remain a potential threat
- ◆ A country is no longer considered to be measles-free when the same strain of virus has been circulating for more than 12 continuous months
- ◆ 33 member states maintain their measles elimination status. However, endemic transmission of the virus was re-established in Venezuela in July 2018 and in Brazil, February 2019

PAHO Recommendations

- ◆ Rapidly increase vaccination coverage to reach **more than 95%** of children age 5 years and under in all countries, prioritizing municipalities and communities reporting low coverage, with 2 doses of the vaccine
- ◆ Ensure vaccination for all health care workers
- ◆ Strengthen national epidemiological surveillance
- ◆ Establish rapid response teams to expeditiously manage suspected cases, avoid nosocomial transmission, prevent new cases, and halt outbreaks

MEASLES IS VERY CONTAGIOUS

ONE PERSON WITH MEASLES CAN SPREAD IT TO 9 OUT OF 10 UNVACCINATED PEOPLE AROUND THEM.



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#GETVAX BECAUSE #VACCINESWORK

“We can interrupt the transmission of measles by working together, in the field, on the borders, with true Pan-American spirit,”

—Director Etienne



PAHO has intensified its response, providing technical support for rapid outbreak control, increased vaccination, enhanced laboratory diagnostic capacity, increased awareness of the population through education and dissemination of promotional material, publishing Epidemiological Alerts, and strengthened epidemiological surveillance to stop transmission. This includes expanding vaccination teams and advocating at the highest political level to implement the measures agreed upon by Ministers of Health in 2017 with the adoption of the [Plan of Action](#) for the Sustainability of Measles, Rubella, and Congenital Rubella Syndrome Elimination in the Americas 2018-2023.

VWA 2019 Measles Activities

This VWA, countries administered over 450,000 doses against measles. The array of actions included national campaigns, mop-up campaigns, and activities targeted towards high-risk groups

- ◆ Earlier in the year, national campaigns were held in **Costa Rica** and **Uruguay**
- ◆ Mop-up campaigns and vaccination activities were reported in **23** countries: **Anguilla, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Colombia, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Martin, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago**
- ◆ **Panama** made visits to over 1,000 households to inquire of any suspicious cases of measles or rubella (finding none)
- ◆ **Colombia** has taken a series of actions over the past year to address the outbreak:
 - An additional dose in August 2018 for 6 to 11 months old
 - Search for defaulters age 2 to 10
 - Strengthening PAI surveillance
 - Visit from the regional monitoring commission and re-verification in March 2019
 - Documented sweep and development of risk indicators for general population



Above: Regional launch in the department of Caaguazú, Paraguay
 Top left: campaign poster directed against measles

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Do your part



Vaccination



Week in
the Americas
2019



#GetVax

www.paho.org/vwa



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VWA 2019 Communications Campaign

Regional Slogan

"Protect your
community.
Do your Part."
#GetVax

National & Sub-national Slogans

- ◆ **Belize:** "Love them, Protect them, Vaccinate them"
- ◆ **Bermuda:** "Take the Lead"
- ◆ **Brazil:** "Brazil Vaccine Movement," and in indigenous regions, "To Vaccinate is to Care"
- ◆ **Colombia:** "Up-to-date vaccines, we make it easy!" and the integrated oral health campaign, "I am the Most Smiling Generation"

Example of vertical regional banner

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- ◆ **Ecuador**, regional motto in Quecha:
"Protect the Ecuadorian Amazon from yellow fever"
- ◆ **Guatemala**, in Q'eqchi:
"Get your children vaccinated to protect them from many diseases, so they can be healthy kids"
- ◆ **Haiti**: "There is life in the vaccine against measles and polio"
- ◆ **Honduras**: "For our families we vaccinate today" and "Vaccination is prevention, get vaccinated now!"
- ◆ **Mexico**: "For the well-being of your family and Mexico, vaccinate them"
- ◆ **Nicaragua**: "Let's vaccinate! Health starts in our community"
- ◆ **Paraguay**: "What you should know about your family's vaccination"
- ◆ **Sint Maarten**: "The Foundation of our Country is in the Health of Our Youth"
- ◆ **Uruguay**: The national influenza campaign focuses on strengthening the concept of "Vaccination for all people," not just boys and girls
- ◆ **Venezuela**: "Two drops of love to eradicate polio"



Toolkit

The 2019 communications toolkit consisted of:

Printed materials

including posters and stickers, distributed across the region in English, Spanish, and Creole.

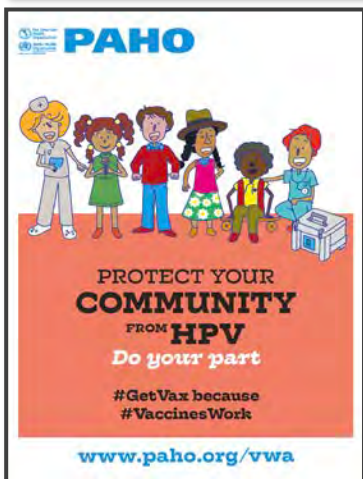
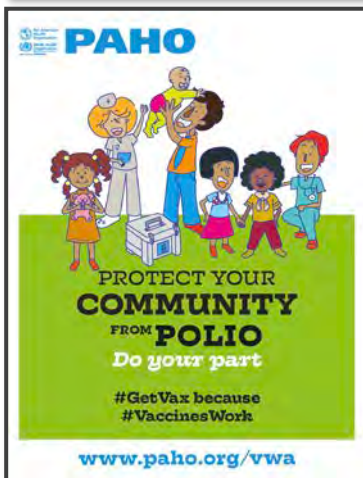
Electronic versions

of all distributed materials, as well as additional designs, audiovisual materials, links to VWA social media materials and resources in Dutch, Portuguese, and French are accessible on the VWA website.

*Above, left: promotional sticker
Below: example of horizontal regional banner*

Disease-specific posters

(only online) were created for countries to use, adapting the regional slogan to 4 specific diseases: polio, influenza, HPV, and measles (see p. 11)



Multimedia



A PSA featuring Director Etienne was filmed in a Paraguayan clinic, available in both English and Spanish (see page 3). Country spotlights on immunization at the community level were also produced, featuring stories from Brazil, Honduras, and Nicaragua, available here: <https://www.paho.org/vwa/espanol-multimedia/>

Digital campaign materials may be accessed below:

- ◆ GIFs and social media cards: <https://www.paho.org/vwa/es/social-media-2019/>
- ◆ Informational videos: <https://www.paho.org/vwa/health-alerts-2018/>
- ◆ Posters, banners, and infographics: <https://www.paho.org/vwa/2019-campaign/>

Hashtags

◆ Español:
#SaludParaTodos #Vacúnate

◆ English:
#HealthForAll #GetVax #VaccinesWork



Social Media Metrics

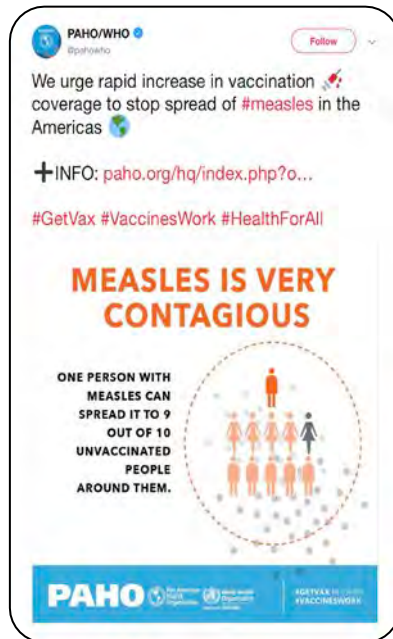
PAHO first used Facebook to promote VWA in 2011, and Twitter soon followed in 2012. By 2019, social media was a vital pillar of the communications strategy. Below are examples of the most popular posts during the month of April:

Twitter

@OPSOMS (Spanish)
78,000 impressions



@PAHOWHO (English)
116,000 impressions



Facebook

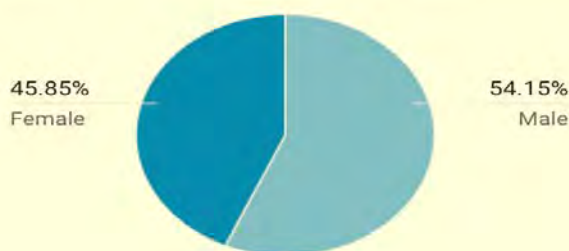
@pahowho
83,000 impressions



The VWA website generated over 16,000 pageviews with an average length of 2:52 min. The charts below show that age 25-34 and men were the most frequent viewers.

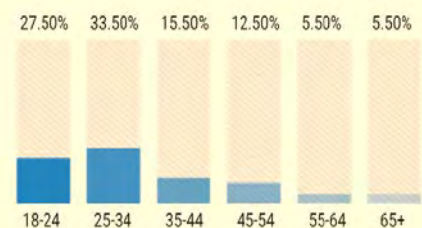
Gender

100% of total sessions



Age

100% of total sessions



National Communications and Outreach Strategies

In addition to the regional campaign materials described above, countries develop their own materials and strategies, engaging with their communities through a local and context-driven approach. The table below depicts some of the most common means of outreach and communication employed by reporting countries.

| Country | Communications Methods | | | | | Health Fairs | Promotional Materials | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------|----|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------|
| | Press Release | Social Media | Radio | TV | Newspaper | | Posters/Banners | Brochures/Flyers | T-shirts |
| Anguilla | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| Bahamas | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Barbados | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | |
| Belize | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Bermuda | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Brazil | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| British Virgin Islands | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Colombia | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Costa Rica | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Cuba | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | |
| Dominica | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | |
| Dominican Rep. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | |
| Ecuador | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| El Salvador | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Grenada | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Guatemala | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Guyana | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Haiti | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | |
| Honduras | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Jamaica | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Mexico | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Montserrat | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Nicaragua | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Panama | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Paraguay | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Peru | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| St. Maarten | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| St. Kitts & Nevis | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| St. Lucia | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| St. Vincent & the Grenadines | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Suriname | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Trinidad and Tobago | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Turks and Caicos | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Uruguay | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Venezuela | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |

Examples of country-level promotional material



Promotional flyer developed in St. Lucia



Local posters made in Sinuapa, Ocotepeque, Honduras

Local parade in Brazil



Vaccination Week in the Americas 2019

Protect You & Your Community

from

Flu
Polio
Measles
Hepatitis B
& other Diseases

#GET VAX [FREE]

WEDNESDAY
APRIL 24, 2019
8:30 - 3:30 PM
@
KSA HEALTH DEPT.
1A CALEDONIA CRESCENT

Promotional flyer for Jamaica



"Bermie Gemy," Bermuda's vaccination & hand washing mascot has been promoting healthy habits since 2010

Semana de la vacunación de las Américas en Paraguay

Acto de Lanzamiento:
12 de Abril en la Costanera
De 15:30 a 19:00 hs.

"Protege a tu comunidad, Haz tu parte"

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Targeting Vaccine Myths and Hesitancy

- ◆ **Belize** held vaccination campaigns and health fairs in at least two religious communities that had expressed vaccine hesitancy, and reported positive reception. In total, 655 MMR doses and 971 DT doses were administered.
- ◆ **Bermuda** has developed a [national strategy](#) to combat vaccine hesitancy and raise coverage by 2021. Under VWA, Bermuda held a public forum called “Let’s Talk Vaccination,” where members of the public had the chance to ask questions of experts.
- ◆ **Cuba** held 812 public health hearings and 2,013 educational talks to engage the community in a public discourse. The themes were vaccination as the most cost-effective public health intervention and creating understanding around the diseases they are able to prevent.

Health Minister Announces Bermuda's Strategy On Vaccination Hesitancy

Health | June 12, 2019



- ◆ The health ministers of **Ecuador** and **Jamaica** publicly denounced anti-vaccination movements and urged the public to stay vigilant against vaccination myths.
- ◆ **Paraguay** held a workshop targeted towards parents with the goal of debunking vaccination myths. The theme was “What you need to know about vaccination and your family.”



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Local Outreach, continued



Sala Cuna, Córdoba, Argentina

In the classroom

Many countries took advantage of meeting children where they spend the majority of their time, in the classroom. The **British Virgin Islands** and **Belize** featured pre-school parades. **Guatemala's** goal to reach every last child took vaccination activities to schools and nurseries. In **Barbados**, public health nurses visited nurseries and primary schools to inspect immunization records. **Honduras's** national deworming campaign, integrated under VWA, is targeted towards school children. **Mexico** partnered with the Ministry of Public Education to reach 5th grade girls for its national HPV campaign.

Sala Cuna

In Córdoba, Argentina, the Sala Cuna daycare center for vulnerable children welcomed the mobile vaccination team.

"Immunization is a fundamental pillar for our community to be healthy... for different reasons, our moms often cannot access health centers."

Click [here](#) for the full video and a look inside the daycare facility.



Petén Norte, Guatemala

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VWA 2019 Regional Launch

Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brazil

The 17th annual celebration of VWA was launched in Cuiabá, the capital city of Mato Grosso, Brazil, on April 22, 2019. In attendance were PAHO Director Dr. Carissa F. Etienne and the Brazilian Minister of Health Dr. Luiz Henrique Mandetta, as well as officials from the Ministries of Health of Colombia, Bolivia, Argentina, Paraguay and the United States. In her remarks, Director Etienne reflected upon the campaign's success in

vaccinating over 740 million people since 2003 but urged the region to remain vigilant against the growing number of cases of imported measles.



She congratulated Brazil for prioritizing vaccination

PAHO launches Vaccination Week in the Americas in Brazil, urging countries in the Region to unite to end measles

coverage as one of its 35 strategic health initiatives, and praised the country's

immunization program as "One of the strongest pillars of the Unified Health System."



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Dr. Mandetta highlighted efforts made by the country to increase vaccination coverage and called on the countries of the Americas and other regions to cooperate to ensure that all populations are immunized. “Brazil calls on the international community to come together so that the world may unite for vaccination. The challenges are not just for the Brazilian health system, but for humanity as a whole.”



The day also marked the beginning of Brazil's annual influenza vaccination campaign, where this year the country successfully vaccinated over 59 million individuals (*for more information, see page 42*). Additionally, VWA coincides with Brazil's Month of Vaccination for Indigenous People, where the goal was to reach 90% of the prioritized communities in all 34 Sanitary Districts, updating vaccination schedules independent of age (*page 38*).

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Selected Country Launches and Highlights

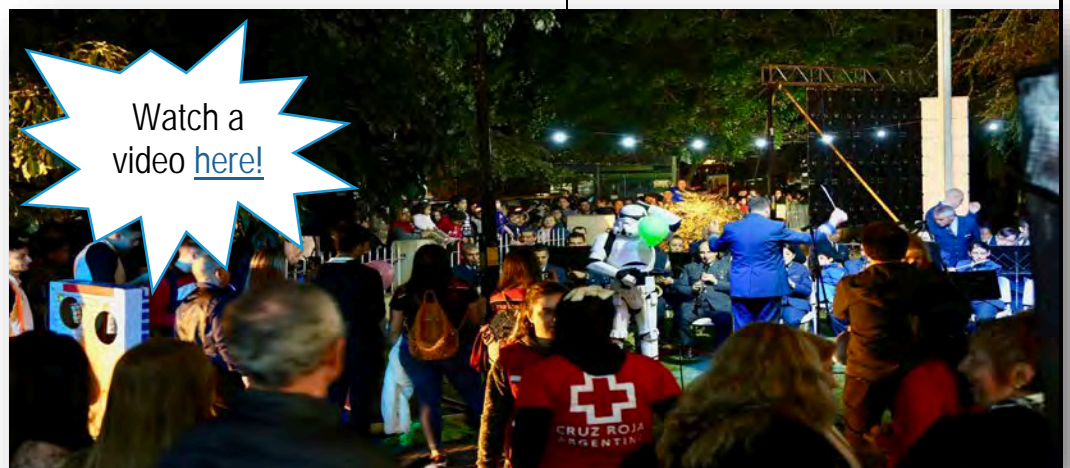
Argentina



Argentina's Night of Vaccines is one of VWA's most unique and well-known events. This year, with support from PAHO and organized by the Pediatric Hospital El Niño Jesús, Argentina held its fifth *fiesta de vacunas* on April 26th in the Córdoba province. Over 7,000 doses were administered, with more than 5,000 people in attendance. The party began at 8 pm and vaccination continued until 4:30 in the morning. The

event was made possible by over 100 volunteers and massive coordination among the medical community.

These efforts have attracted recognition from political leaders. In December 2018, the Argentine Senate [approved a law](#) that mandates free vaccination be made available to all. The text of the law describes the right to be vaccinated and the obligation not to infect others. Article 27 cites the important role VWA has played throughout the region!



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Belize

Belize held health fairs and vaccination campaigns in at least two religious communities in an effort to confront vaccine hesitancy. The campaigns were reported to be well received—455 MMR and 1,827 DT doses were accepted in these communities.

British Virgin Islands

BVI kicked off VWA on April 22. The Minister of Health's address was followed with an on wheels and foot parade through Road Town. Live interviews and education were conducted as the parade processed through the street. The parade featured a local nursery, Tiny Tots, to spread the message!



Vaccination campaign held in religious communities, Belize



Canada

Canada celebrated their annual National Immunization Awareness Week during the same period as VWA, April 20-27. Operating under the VWA framework, this campaign adopted the slogan Do Your Part. Visit the [website](#) to find more information.



Tiny Tots preschool, BVI

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Colombia

Colombia kicked off their national launch on Saturday, April 27th, in Risaralda, as well as dozens of celebrations throughout the country. In total, over 4,000 strategic vaccination points were set up nationwide, and the vaccination goal was surpassed by more than 100,000.



Cuba

Cuba launched the beginning of VWA alongside the 58th annual bOPV campaign. The two have been celebrated together for three years. The kickoff took place at the Wilfredo Pérez Hospital, San Miguel del Padrón, Havana. In attendance were health experts, local authorities, EPI representatives, leaders of the Federation of Cuban Women, and school children.



Above: National launch at the Wilfredo Pérez Hospital, San Miguel del Padrón, in the province of La Habana, Cuba

Ecuador

This year, in addition to increasing vaccination coverage more broadly, Ecuador focused its efforts on interrupting the transmission of yellow fever, using the national slogan “Protect the Ecuadorian Amazon Against Yellow Fever.” The country aimed to administer 172,000 doses against the virus, prioritizing high and medium-risk jurisdictions as well as border zones.

Additionally, the Minister of Health, Dr. Veronica Espinosa, conducted several radio interviews to communicate to the public the safety and efficacy of vaccines.

“Let’s avoid the tide of false information, that they want us to think vaccines are not effective.”



Grenada

Grenada held a quiz competition for parents and caregivers on immunization topics, awarding winners with trophies and a weekend resort package for two!



Award being presented in Grenada

Guyana & Suriname Binational Launch



Guyana and Suriname kicked off VWA 2019 with a binational launch held at the High Dam Health Facility in Region 5, Guyana. The day was started with a parade, and over 200 people were in attendance. Remarks were given by the Honorable Minister of Public Health Ms. Volda Lawrence, Acting EPI Manager of the Bureau of Public Health in Suriname Ms. Meryl Maes, and PAHO/WHO Guyana country officer Dr. Paul Edwards. Ms. Maes emphasized the importance of the protection of the international border in ensuring that all persons are vaccinated and stressed the individual responsibilities of each health worker to ensure that every child is vaccinated.

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Honduras & Guatemala Binational Launch

On April 25, a binational launch was held in Omoa, Cortés, Honduras along the Guatemalan



border. Among participants were the First Lady of Honduras Ana García de Hernández; PAHO Director of the Department of Family and Health Promotion, Dr. Andrés De Francisco; and PAHO/WHO representatives and secretaries of health from both countries.

The First Lady gave remarks, urging parents to vaccinate and deworm their children so that they are able to learn and thrive

“Immunization is a great equalizer”

—Dr. Andres de Francisco

in the classroom. Dr. Andres de Francisco applauded both countries for coming together as a “Prime example

example of the Pan-Americanism that is the hallmark of Vaccination Week.”

He reflected upon the power of immunization, calling it “a great equalizer— we all benefit from the protection it offers, whether we are young or old, rich or poor, or live in urban or rural areas.” Honduras held additional launches in the capital city Tegucigalpa.

Jamaica

Health Minister Dr. Christopher Tufton delivered the keynote address at the [National Immunization Fair](#), April 30, at the Spanish Town Prison Oval in St. Catherine, with more than 400 people in attendance.

“Immunization is a duty and responsibility for



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community and country,” he said, urging everyone to do their part. He also pushed back on the misinformation surrounding vaccination, urging the public not to believe lies regarding vaccines.

Mexico

Mexico celebrated VWA alongside its second annual National Health Week. The second annual celebration included a focus on the second dose of HPV for adolescents. In all, over

2 million people were vaccinated.

Earlier in the month, (April 10), Mexico signed a declaration of intent to join PAHO’s Revolving and Strategic fund.



Dr. Christopher Tufton, Health Minister of Jamaica

Montserrat

Montserrat celebrated VWA with a mini health fair featuring food safety, mental health and meditation, dental care, immunization, and blood pressure and blood glucose screens.



Right: Health fair flyer, Montserrat

Nicaragua

On Tuesday, April 23, Nicaragua held 19 launch celebrations across the country, with more than 25,000 participants. Vaccination in Nicaragua is a participatory process, with support from community leaders and positive public reception. In all, Nicaragua successfully administered 1.25 million doses to children, teens, pregnant women, and the elderly.



Launch in Cardenas, Nicaragua



Paraguay

Paraguay celebrated its national launch on Friday April 12, at the waterfront of Asunción, with a day full of festivities. In addition to health authorities, national personalities participated including Miss Paraguay, Verónica Viveros, retired soccer player José Luis Chilavert, Paraguayan athlete Camila Pirelli, and Olympic swimmer Benjamín Hockin. Musician Pablo Benegas performed as well as the chamber ensemble of the National

Symphony Orchestra. This multicultural event saw participation from the embassies of Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Colombia, Peru, and Mexico. There was a multicultural exhibition where each country displayed information on vaccination, as well as cultural information such as typical foods and dress of the country. Prizes were awarded to children who presented their up-to-date vaccination cards. Similar celebrations were held throughout the country.



The day of festivities included musical performances and appearances made by national celebrities, such as Miss Paraguay Verónica Viveros (top right) and professional athlete Camila Pirelli (bottom left).

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Peru



Peru launched their celebration event in Comas, Lima on April 22nd, with the participation

from the Minister of Health, Dr. Zulema Tomás González, PAHO representative Dr. Raúl González, and the district mayor, Mr. Raúl Díaz Pérez.

Dr. Gonzalez recognized the hard work of the health personnel, “Especially those who go on foot where there are no roads, mounting boats and crossing rivers.”

[After the inauguration](#), PAHO/WHO representatives accompanied the minister to survey the newly renovated facilities of the New Year Health Center in the Integrated Network of Lima Norte, representing the commitment of the Peruvian government.

It's estimated that over 20,000 Peruvian nurses were mobilized to participate in this year's VWA!

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

This year, St. Vincent & the Grenadines placed focus on medical staff and frontline workers to ensure that persons without documented evidence of 2 doses of MMR were vaccinated. In addition, awareness in

schools and community outreach efforts were

conducted.



Above: Celebration at the Georgetown Clinic in St. Vincent & the Grenadines

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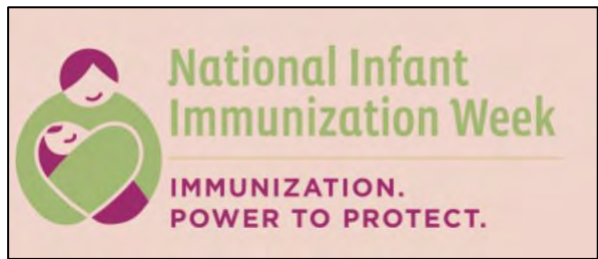
Trinidad & Tobago

celebrated VWA by holding health fairs all over the country, from schools and malls to farms and supermarkets. The country focused on highlighting a measles catch-up campaign for children, elderly and migrant populations. The events were well received by the public.

United States

The United States traditionally observes VWA by celebrating the annual National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW). This year marked the 25th anniversary and ran April 27 to May 4. Since 1994, state and local health

departments, national immunization partners, health care professionals, community leaders, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have come together under the NIIW framework to highlight the positive impact of vaccination on the lives of infants and children, and to call attention to immunization achievements.



* * *



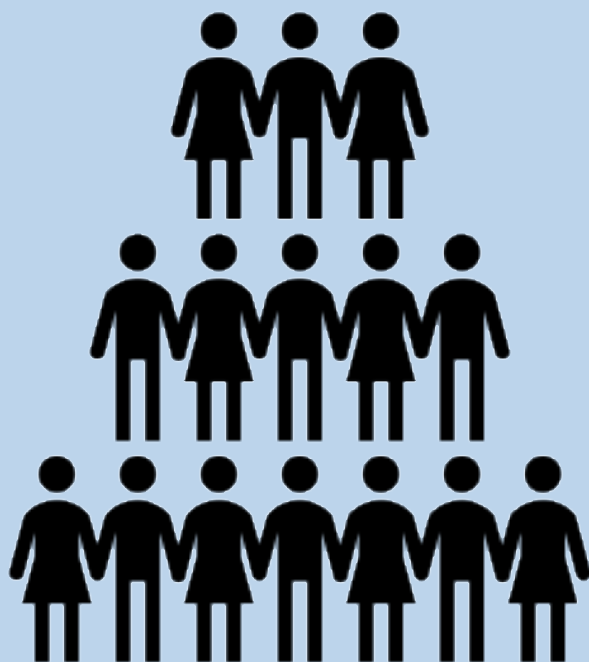
In Trinidad & Tobago, the health stands staged in malls and shopping centers received a high volume of the interested public

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Regional Results



VWA 2019 Cumulative Total*



65,806,189
Individuals

*Estimates were used for Bahamas, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, and Peru, as results were pending at the time of publication

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Table 1. 2019 Results by Population*

| VWA 2019 RESULTS BY POPULATION | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Country | 0-12 months | 1-4 years | <5 years | > 5 to 18 years | WCBA's Td | > 60 years | Adults | High risk occupations | Others/ Unspecified | TOTAL |
| Anguilla | 12 | 3 | - | 161 | - | - | 6 | - | - | 182 |
| Bahamas | - | 500 | 2,000 | 1,000 | - | - | 1,000 | - | - | 4,500 |
| Barbados | - | - | - | 25 | - | 52 | 620 | 67 | - | 764 |
| Belize | 1,694 | 937 | 2,631 | 1,539 | 410 | 28 | 1,752 | 149 | 346 | 6,855 |
| Bermuda | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Brazil | 3,872,675 | 6,063,595 | 2,125,993 | - | 1,998,711 | 19,314,974 | - | 4,295,976 | 12,377,516 | 59,900,000 |
| British Virgin Islands | 10 | 12 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 35 | 62 | 26 | 7 | 160 |
| Colombia | 206,158 | 107,926 | 52,898 | 300 | 105,801 | 48,986 | 41,086 | 0 | 0 | 563,065 |
| Costa Rica | - | - | 4,567 | - | - | - | 9,053 | 340 | - | 13,960 |
| Cuba | 113,495 | 233,368 | - | 124,794 | - | - | - | - | - | 471,657 |
| Dominica | 349 | 211 | - | 13 | 31 | 22 | 69 | 126 | 137 | 958 |
| Dominican Rep. | 168,125 | 382,315 | 550,440 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 550,440 |
| Ecuador | - | 12,000 | 53,333 | 53,333 | - | - | 53,333 | - | - | 172,000 |
| El Salvador | 30,900 | 200,000 | 230,900 | - | 20,845 | 177,256 | 17,750 | 20,000 | - | 466,751 |
| Grenada | 238 | 263 | 229 | 857 | 8 | 28 | 336 | 70 | 9 | 2,038 |
| Guatemala | 111,107 | 71,428 | 182,535 | 7,782 | 21,069 | - | - | 5,158 | - | 216,544 |
| Guyana | - | 2,000 | - | 28,000 | 2,000 | - | 1,000 | - | - | 33,000 |
| Haiti | 6,536 | 6,097 | - | - | - | - | 7,840 | - | - | 20,473 |
| Honduras | 41,288 | 100,235 | 141,523 | 24,592 | - | 332,843 | 110,946 | 21,867 | 24,473 | 656,244 |
| Jamaica | 597 | 666 | 86 | 1,339 | 460 | 1,133 | 5,721 | 1,777 | 823 | 12,662 |
| Mexico | 404,014 | 186,049 | 590,063 | 29,099 | 189,295 | 46,855 | 230,425 | 565 | 1,100,000 | 2,076,302 |
| Montserrat | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 22 | 24 | 1 | 1 | 33 |
| Nicaragua | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Panama | 8,389 | 31,420 | - | - | 41,136 | 30,387 | - | 9,870 | 45,100 | 166,302 |
| Paraguay | 49,621 | 88,465 | 138,309 | 314,852 | 12,337 | 91,763 | 7,601 | 35,590 | 167,561 | 453,161 |
| Peru | 4,365 | 4,366 | 4,365 | 4,366 | - | - | - | - | - | 8,731 |
| St. Kitts & Nevis | - | - | 2 | 6 | - | - | - | - | - | 8 |
| St. Lucia | 76 | 260 | 336 | 63 | 0 | 122 | 373 | 154 | - | 894 |
| St. Maarten | 10 | 18 | 29 | 107 | - | - | - | - | - | 127 |
| St Vincent & the Grenadines | 89 | 40 | 125 | 240 | 1 | 193 | 0 | 11 | 12 | 711 |
| Suriname | 320 | 605 | 258 | 206 | 0 | 141 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 1,553 |
| Trinidad & Tobago | 451 | 1,631 | 288 | 558 | - | 134 | 592 | 300 | 2,000 | 5,954 |
| Turks and Caicos | 0 | 0 | 0 | 160 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | - | 160 |
| Uruguay | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Venezuela | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| TOTAL | 5,020,519 | 7,494,410 | 4,080,910 | 593,409 | 2,392,104 | 20,044,974 | 489,612 | 4,392,047 | 13,717,985 | 65,806,189 |

*Result in italics are estimates. Final results pending.

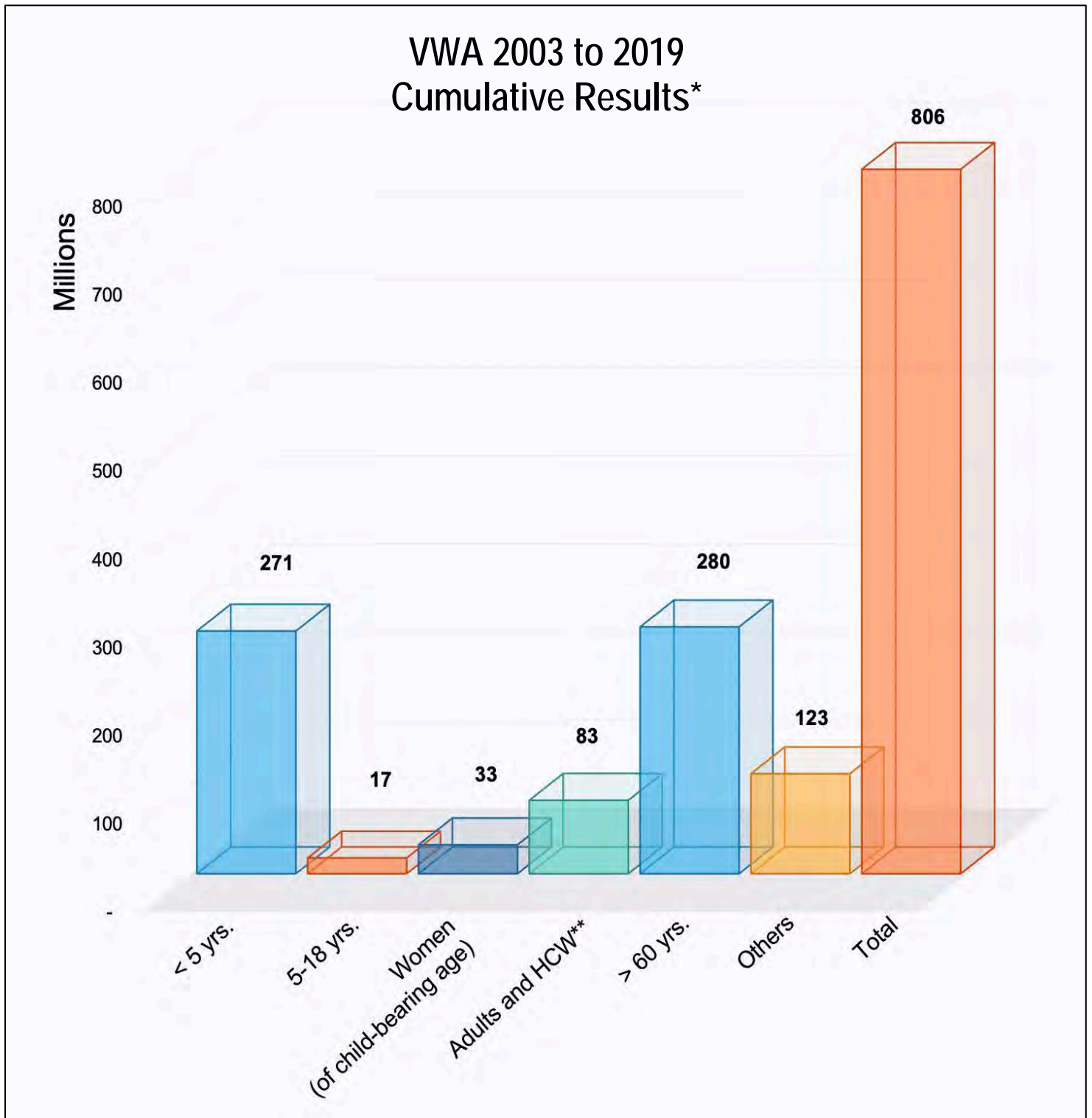
Table 2. 2019 Results by Antigen**

| VWA 2019 RESULTS BY ANTIGEN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Country | MMR | MR | DTP | DT | Td | TT | Hib | Hep B | Pentavalent | Polio (OPV & IPV) | BCG | YF | Influenza | RV | Pneumo | HPV | Varicella | Other |
| Anguilla | 2 | 0 | 2 | - | 164 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | - |
| Bahamas | 4,500 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 300 | 300 | - | - | 400 | - | - | 1,000 | - | - |
| Barbados | 66 | - | 5 | 18 | 322 | - | - | 60 | - | 4 | - | 81 | 288 | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| Belize | 1,778 | - | 678 | 81 | 2,425 | - | - | 551 | 997 | 1,675 | 333 | 142 | 420 | - | - | 1,101 | - | 0 |
| Bermuda | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Brazil | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| British Virgin Islands | 53 | - | 10 | 0 | 99 | 0 | 0 | 59 | 9 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | 9 |
| Colombia | 112,277 | 44,566 | 115,982 | 50 | 388 | 114,515 | - | 53,984 | 156,984 | 273,209 | 50,160 | 201,714 | 113,861 | 104,078 | 163,731 | 46,510 | 56,536 | 100,704 |
| Costa Rica | - | - | - | 7,733 | - | - | - | 952 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 652 | - | 54 | 2 |
| Cuba | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 471,657 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Dominica | 207 | - | 63 | 287 | - | - | - | 105 | 141 | 197 | 13 | 8 | 22 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Dominican Rep. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 505,347 | - | - | - | - | 45,093 | - | - | - |
| Ecuador | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 172,000 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| El Salvador | 51,000 | - | 12,000 | - | 38,595 | - | - | 7,650 | 30,000 | 41,980 | 7,800 | 1,000 | 400,000 | 14,900 | 22,100 | 8,035 | - | - |
| Grenada | 220 | 0 | 94 | 183 | 760 | 0 | 0 | 108 | 240 | 560 | 0 | 0 | 168 | 0 | 0 | 121 | - | 22 |
| Guatemala | 20,649 | - | 49,665 | - | 14,249 | 7,120 | 29,493 | 34,415 | 29,493 | 49,559 | 8,524 | - | - | 19,107 | 30,109 | 7,482 | - | 5,158 |
| Guyana | 5,000 | - | - | 7,000 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,000 | - | - | - | 18,000 | - | - |
| Haiti | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Honduras | 18,287 | - | 20,865 | - | 24,592 | - | - | - | 20,692 | 20,805 | 2,598 | - | 807,139 | 12,517 | 23,896 | 10,970 | - | - |
| Jamaica | 2,724 | - | 332 | - | 4,670 | - | 3 | 4,483 | 382 | 2,273 | 56 | 1,327 | 5,867 | - | 71 | 1,361 | - | 430 |
| Mexico | 90,319 | 44 | 96,697 | - | 456,922 | - | - | 144,283 | 283,011 | - | 61,331 | - | - | 287,224 | 235,852 | 990,000 | - | 5,639 |
| Montserrat | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | - | - |
| Nicaragua | 59,757 | 46,878 | 112,279 | 100 | 0 | 713,408 | 0 | 0 | 60,583 | 196,226 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 35,817 | 105,931 | 0 | - | - |
| Panama | 7,419 | 13,598 | 2,920 | - | - | 13,053 | - | 2,770 | - | 6,222 | 771 | 1,648 | 172,210 | 2,907 | 15,394 | 5,594 | 3,265 | 30,740 |
| Paraguay | 18,874 | 11,603 | 17,396 | - | 24,748 | - | - | 10,383 | 26,644 | 43,999 | 9,866 | 18,222 | 368,326 | 17,847 | 27,967 | 20,200 | - | 8,156 |
| Peru | 4,366 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4,365 | 8,731 | - | - | - | 4,365 | 4,365 | - | - | - |
| St. Kitts & Nevis | 5 | - | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| St. Lucia | 215 | 0 | 73 | 4 | 8 | 73 | 122 | 160 | 28 | 33 | 1 | 10 | 719 | 0 | 0 | 4 | - | - |
| St. Maarten | 78 | - | 30 | 87 | - | - | 30 | 23 | - | 117 | - | - | - | - | 9 | 26 | - | - |
| St. Vincent & the Grenadines | 61 | 0 | 10 | 5 | 265 | 5 | 0 | 74 | 37 | 37 | 16 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 0 | - |
| Suriname | 229 | - | 338 | 6 | 5 | 0 | - | 6 | 159 | 482 | - | 106 | 164 | - | - | 0 | - | 48 |
| Trinidad & Tobago | 1,376 | - | 1,327 | 25 | 895 | - | 25 | 442 | 396 | 1,835 | - | 2,878 | 1,854 | - | 825 | 637 | 55 | 90 |
| Turks & Caicos | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 300 | 0 | 0 |
| Uruguay | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Venezuela | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| TOTAL | 399,463 | 116,689 | 432,778 | 15,581 | 569,129 | 848,174 | 29,673 | 280,589 | 614,464 | 1,625,282 | 141,478 | 400,154 | 1,901,418 | 498,762 | 675,995 | 1,111,363 | 59,912 | 151,198 |

*Result in italics are estimates. Final results pending.

**Countries do not always report doses administered by antigen, which is why numbers appear larger in Table 1

Figure 1. VWA Cumulative Results, by Population Group



*2019 estimates were used for Bahamas, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, and Peru, as results were pending at the time of publication

**HCW = Health Care Workers

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Country-Level Results

Despite the incredible array of diverse activities that take place under the VWA framework, most countries' efforts may be categorized according to the following three strategic areas of PAHO's Regional Immunization Vision and Strategy (RIVS):



1. Protecting the Achievements

- ❖ Eradicating polio
- ❖ Eliminating measles, rubella, and congenital rubella syndrome
- ❖ Completing childhood immunization schedules
- ❖ Maintaining hepatitis B and pertussis control



2. Completing the Unfinished Agenda

- ❖ Protecting high-risk groups and vulnerable populations
- ❖ Reducing risk of seasonal influenza and yellow fever
- ❖ Eliminating maternal and neonatal tetanus



3. Confronting New Challenges

- ❖ Introducing new vaccines such as rotavirus, pneumococcal and human papilloma virus
- ❖ Increasing use of VWA as a platform for integrated activities
- ❖ Strengthening occupational capacity and infrastructure

Protecting the Achievements

(polio, MMR*, childhood schedules, hepatitis B and pertussis control)

**For a description of 2019 measles activities, refer to page 10*

Polio

2019 marks the 25th anniversary since the Region of the Americas was declared polio-free by the World Health Organization, and countries of the region remain committed to upholding this achievement. This year, at least three countries held **national, indiscriminate polio campaigns**: **Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Haiti**. At least **19 other countries** carried out vaccination activities, for a total of 1,625,255 doses delivered. This year, Cuba celebrated its 58th annual bOPV campaign, achieving a national coverage rate of 98.3 percent. Since 1962, the country has administered [over 85 million](#) doses.



A child receives a bOPV dose under Dominican Republic's national polio campaign

Efforts to Update and Complete Childhood Schedules

19 countries took advantage of VWA to intensify efforts to begin, continue, or complete routine childhood vaccination schedules:

Barbados, Belize, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Colombia, Dominica, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago

Vaccination strategies included fixed and mobile vaccination posts, brigades, house-to-house visits, and intensified communication efforts.

Hepatitis B

20 countries administered the hepatitis B vaccine or the hep B-containing pentavalent vaccine for a total of **832,547 doses**:

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Anguilla, Barbados, Belize, BVI, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago

- ◆ **Belize** introduced the hep B vaccine to the public health sector in February 2018. The country used VWA 2019 as an opportunity to promote the vaccine in private hospitals, with 3 incorporating it under their immediate newborn care protocols.
- ◆ **Guyana** conducted a pilot campaign for the use of pediatric hep B vaccine at birth that commenced in April 2019. A national roll out across all regions will be launched in December 2019.
- ◆ **St. Lucia** introduced the hep B birth dose in 2018 and used VWA as a chance to sensitize the public.
- ◆ **Turks & Caicos** discussed the introduction of the vaccine and is currently drafting a cabinet paper for consideration.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

At least **19 countries** administered a pertussis-containing vaccine (DTP, pentavalent, or both) for a total of **1,000,530 doses**. Among reporting countries are:

Anguilla, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Colombia, Dominica, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago

Completing the Unfinished Agenda

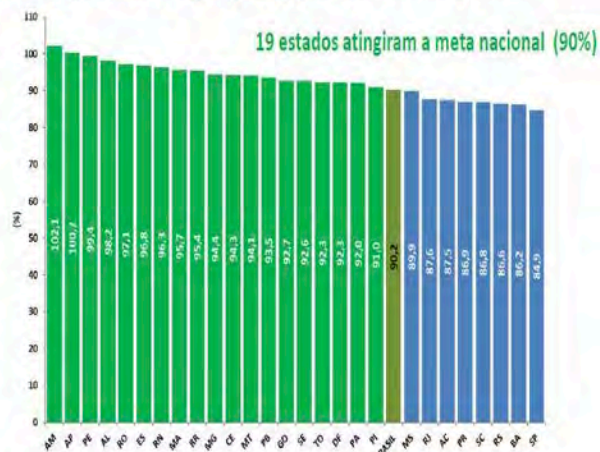
(Seasonal influenza, yellow fever, maternal and neonatal tetanus, and reaching high-risk groups and vulnerable populations)

Seasonal Influenza

At least **14 countries** conducted activities against seasonal influenza: **Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Dominica, Grenada, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Paraguay, St. Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, and Uruguay**

- ◆ **Brazil** executed the country's 21st National Campaign Against Influenza, with a large mobilization in the 5,570 municipalities. In indigenous regions, the entire population was vaccinated against influenza (6 months and older). Non-indigenous prioritized groups were children, elderly, pregnant women, health workers, teachers, chronically ill, and prisoners, among others. In total, over 59 million individuals were vaccinated.

Cobertura vacinal na campanha de vacinação contra Influenza (todos os grupos), por UF. Brasil, 2019



Above: Results from Brazil's national influenza campaign

- ◆ This year, **Honduras** extended the influenza vaccine to include the healthy population age 6-23 months, delivering more than 800,000 doses in total.
- ◆ **Paraguay** held its annual national campaign, administering nearly 400,000 doses. Prioritized groups included children (6 months to 3 years), pregnant & postpartum women, the immunocompromised & chronically ill, the elderly, health care workers, and indigenous & displaced communities.
- ◆ In **Uruguay**, VWA 2019 marked the beginning of the country's national influenza campaign. Vaccination activities were carried out for the entire population, with a special emphasis on the most vulnerable. Mobile vaccination posts were strategically located to facilitate easy access. The campaign worked to strengthen the concept of "Vaccination for All People," not just boys and girls.

Yellow Fever

At least 11 countries including **Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay, St. Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago** vaccinated against yellow fever. Examples include:

- ◆ **Colombia** delivered over **200,000 doses** under its National Plan for the Prevention and Control of Yellow Fever, almost 2x its target!
- ◆ **Ecuador**: Following the March 9th alert from the Ministry of Health, Ecuador has developed a national campaign against yellow fever. Activities will be targeted towards high and medium-risk districts, following the Directorate of Epidemiological Surveillance's technical report. The campaign also includes intensified communications and awareness efforts, with a goal of administering **172,000 doses**.

Maternal and neonatal tetanus

This year, **Honduras, Guatemala Mexico, and Nicaragua** vaccinated pregnant women against tetanus. In **Guatemala**, the Tdap vaccine was introduced for the first time.



Above, newspaper clipping in Guatemala: "Pregnant women receive the Tdap vaccine"

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High-Risk Groups and Vulnerable Populations

One of the most important and celebrated aspects of VWA is the opportunity to ensure that vaccination is provided to *all* people, with a particular focus on high-risk and vulnerable populations. Hard to reach areas are often traversed by foot, horse, or boat; countries have had success deploying brigades or mobile vaccination units. The door-to-door strategy is frequently used as a measure to capture vulnerable and low-coverage populations, ensuring no one is left behind.

Health workers cross hills by foot in Panama

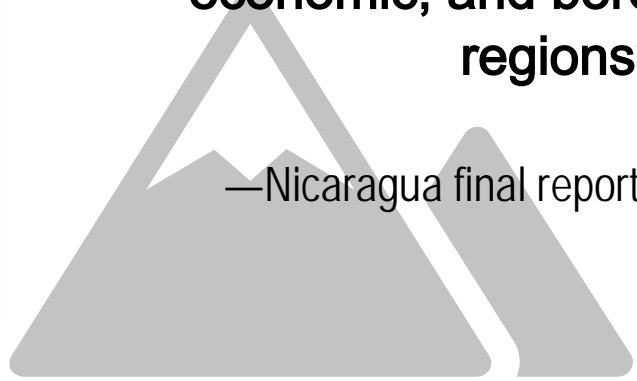


Health worker travels by horse in Paraguay



“This VWA, we prioritized the population with the most difficult access—geographic, cultural, economic, and border regions”

—Nicaragua final report



PAHO



Left: Panama worked with its National Aeronaval Service to reach the health region of Ngöbe Buglé so that teams could reach the corregimiento of Río Piedra and Loma Yuca. Health workers went door-to-door to vaccinate against Tdap and HPV

Health Care Workers (HCW)

At least 11 countries prioritized HCW:

Barbados, Belize, Brazil (influenza, > 4 million) **Costa Rica** (Hep B, DT, Varicella, Pneumo-13), **Dominican Republic** (measles), **Grenada** (hep B, influenza, MMR), **Guatemala** (Tdap), **Honduras** (influenza), **Jamaica** (MMR, DTP, DT, influenza), **Nicaragua** (MR), **Paraguay** (influenza)

- ◆ **Guatemala** prioritized the vaccination of HCW with Tdap, a newly introduced vaccine. In total, over 5,000 doses were administered to HCW. Additionally, sensitization sessions for HCW emphasizing the importance of vaccination with hep B, influenza, and MR were held.

Other Occupational Risk Groups

- ◆ Construction and sanitation workers: **Belize, British Virgin Islands** (hep B & DT), **Jamaica** (tetanus)
- ◆ Customs, port, and immigration workers: **Barbados** (measles), **Belize, Dominica** (MMR), **Paraguay** (MR), **St. Kitts & Nevis** (measles)
- ◆ Farmers and fishermen: **Belize, Honduras** (influenza), **Jamaica** (tetanus)
- ◆ Police and armed forces: **Belize, Brazil** (influenza), **Jamaica** (influenza)
- ◆ Tourism and hospitality industry: **BVI** (hep B & dT), **Dominican Republic** (measles), **Jamaica** (polio, MMR), **Nicaragua** (MR), **Panama, Paraguay** (MR)

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Indigenous Communities, Low Coverage Regions, Rural and Urban Fringes

- ◆ Under **Brazil's** Month of Vaccination of Indigenous Peoples (MVIP), a combined effort by the National Vaccination Program and the Department of Indigenous Health, the immunization schedules of over 640,000 individuals in indigenous communities were updated. The annual campaign was executed throughout all 34 Special Indigenous Health Districts (DSEI). In addition to vaccinating against influenza, routine schedules were updated, indiscriminate of age.



Health workers travel by foot in Brazil

- ◆ Other activities for indigenous communities were held in **Belize, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama** (17,375 influenza), **Paraguay** (influenza) and **Suriname** (catch-up campaign in hinterland regions with poor sanitation against polio).

Immigrants, Travelers, and Border Zones

- ◆ **Belize, Dominican Republic** (yellow fever, MR, bOPV), **Panama**, and **St. Lucia** (measles) held vaccination activities for these communities.
- ◆ **Colombia**, experiencing massive migration from Venezuela, has made all 21 vaccines of under the national schedule available to the migrant population.
- ◆ **Honduras** staged a vaccination event along a frequently traveled migrant corridor to the U.S.
- ◆ **Trinidad & Tobago** immunized migrants with MMR, DPT, Polio and Td.

Pregnant Women, Elderly, and Chronically ill Patients

- ◆ **Belize, Brazil** (influenza), **Guatemala** (Tdap), **Honduras** (influenza + Td), **Panama** (influenza), **Mexico** (Tdap), and **Paraguay** (influenza) vaccinated pregnant women
- ◆ **Grenada** made visits to elderly homes (influenza & hep B); **Brazil, Honduras** and **Suriname** vaccinated the elderly against influenza
- ◆ **Trinidad & Tobago** immunized the elderly with MMR, DPT, Polio, Td, seasonal influenza, and pneumococcal
- ◆ **Brazil** (influenza) **Grenada** (influenza + hep B), **Jamaica** (influenza), **Honduras** (influenza), **Panama**, and **Paraguay** (influenza) vaccinated chronically ill populations

Further Activities

- ◆ **Belize** paid special attention to cultural and religious communities that have expressed vaccine hesitancy
- ◆ **The British Virgin Islands** assessed the vaccination status of home-schooled children
- ◆ Under **Colombia's** hepatitis B control plan the most vulnerable groups such as intravenous drug users, transgender individuals, and sex workers were reached
- ◆ **Paraguay** took extra measures to reach communities that had been displaced by recent [flooding](#) to vaccinate against influenza

Confronting New Challenges

(Introduction of new vaccines, building capacity & strengthening infrastructure, integrated interventions)

New Vaccines

HPV

16 countries have reported vaccination activities against HPV, for a total of **1,084,311 doses**:

Anguilla, Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Montserrat, Panama, Paraguay, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, Trinidad & Tobago, and Turks & Caicos

- ◆ **For boys and girls:** This year, **Panama, and St. Lucia** vaccinated boys alongside girls against HPV
- ◆ **Paraguay** held an annual campaign, with support from the Ministry of Education & Sciences, vaccinating over 20,000 girls age 10



National HPV campaign in Paraguay

- ◆ **Grenada and St. Lucia** have recently introduced the vaccine (2018-2019) and used VWA as an opportunity to spread awareness

Other activities included:

- ◆ **BVI** introduced the vaccine to the routine immunization schedule for girls age 10-12 years old. Educational counseling was

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provided to parents and guardians, students, PTA groups, and church groups during VWA

- ◆ **Jamaica:** The period for administering the 2nd dose of the HPV vaccines in schools began in April 2019. VWA was used as an opportunity to promote HPV vaccination and capture those who may have missed doses since the introduction of the program in October 2017.
- ◆ **Uruguay:** The introduction of the HPV vaccine for males is currently under study
- ◆ **St. Kitts & Nevis:** Sensitization of HPV and introduction under the National Immunization Schedule were conducted during different family health clinics
- ◆ **Trinidad & Tobago** held education and sensitization activities

Pneumococcus

11 countries vaccinated against pneumococcus: **Colombia, Dominican Republic Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, St. Maarten, and Trinidad & Tobago**

- ◆ **Belize** has plans to introduce the vaccine, along with rotavirus, to the national schedule. During VWA, justification and evidence were presented to the Minister of Health and CEO
- ◆ **Dominican Republic** held a national campaign to update all children age 3-35 months against pneumo

Building Capacity & Strengthening Infrastructure

The following countries used VWA as an opportunity to retrain and refresh health care workers to strengthen health services for effective vaccine administration:

Belize, Bermuda, Brazil, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, St. Lucia and St. Maarten



- ◆ **Brazil** sent technical teams to the Special Indigenous Health Districts (DSEI) to prepare for the Month of Vaccination for Indigenous People (MVIP)
- ◆ **Guatemala** held training sessions to prepare for the national SPR-OPV follow-up campaign planned for September 2019
- ◆ **Belize and Nicaragua** took this time to strengthen epidemiological surveillance of vaccine preventable diseases (VPD)

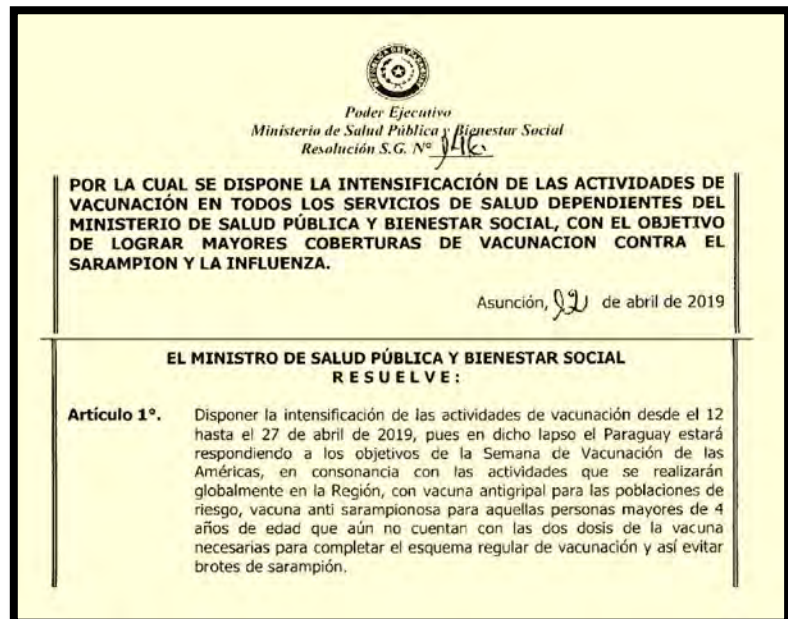
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Information Dissemination

- ◆ **Brazil** distributed the 21st National Influenza Vaccination Campaign Technical Report to all health professionals
- ◆ **British Virgin Islands**, through collaboration with the infectious control unit, disseminated information to hospital staff on the prevention of infectious diseases such as measles and influenza
- ◆ **Uruguay** officially presented the 2018 National Guide for Vaccination in Special Situations via videoconference with participation from Ministry of Public Health authorities, PAHO representatives, scientific societies, health personnel, health providers, and media

Further Activities

- ◆ **Bermuda**, with PAHO support, implemented an electronic immunization registry in an effort to strengthen health services and identify gaps in vaccination. The country is also developing a smart phone app for immunization scheduling and guidance on pediatric health
- ◆ **Paraguay**: Through resolution SG No. 146/2019, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare committed to supporting VWA activities and objectives, including the guarantee of vaccination against influenza and measles, active institutional and community searches for suspected cases, immediate notification to the EPI, the completion of timely investigations, and a mandate to prioritize vaccination as a pillar of all health services, among others.
- ◆ **St. Lucia** made field visits to low coverage facilities to assess registers, electronic data, defaulter tracking systems, refusal logs, and inventory management. Sessions were held with the Electronic Health Information team to strengthen reporting on vaccine coverage
- ◆ **Turks & Caicos Islands** held a one-day retreat for public health nurses, where a measles outbreak response plan was drafted



Above: The resolution passed by Paraguay's Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare

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Integrated Interventions

Several countries have a history of integrating other preventative health interventions under the VWA framework. In 2019, **19 countries** reported integrating activities. Some of the most common examples are provided below:

Health Fairs

At least **9 countries** held health fairs for the general public, including:

Belize, Colombia, Jamaica, Montserrat, Nicaragua, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago

- ◆ Panama celebrated its national launch with an integrated health fair, featuring health screens and vaccination for pets
- ◆ Trinidad & Tobago celebrated health fairs across the country, complete with screening, education, and counseling



Integrated Health fair in St. Lucia



Oral health care, Trinidad & Tobago

Health Screens and Assessments

9 countries provided screening and assessments: Brazil (hepatitis, syphilis, HIV, cervical cancer), Costa Rica, Dominica, Jamaica, Montserrat, Panama, St. Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago

- ◆ In addition to screening, some countries provided basic medical, nursing, and/or dental care:

Brazil, Colombia, Montserrat, Trinidad & Tobago

- ◆ Colombia integrated VWA with its national oral health campaign under the motto "I am the Most Smiling Generation"



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Supplements and Antiparasitics

- ◆ Belize, Brazil, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Venezuela administered vitamin A supplements
- ◆ Belize also offered iron and folic acid
- ◆ Guatemala and Mexico provided oral rehydration salts
- ◆ Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua administered antiparasitics



Administration of deparasitic and Vitamin A in Nicaragua



General Health Education and Promotion

At least 7 countries provided general health information and education: **Brazil, Colombia, Jamaica, Mexico, Montserrat, St. Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago**

- ◆ Many countries provided information on the prevention of vector-borne illnesses (i.e. dengue, zika, chikungunya): **Colombia, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, St. Kitts & Nevis, Trinidad & Tobago**
- ◆ This year **Colombia** has experienced a dengue epidemic, and cases are expected to grow. In coordination with the Vector-Transmitted Disease Team (ETV) the anti-dengue campaign was integrated with VWA communications under the motto "Cut the wings of Dengue" (see poster above)
- ◆ **Suriname** provide counseling for STIs and reproductive health
- ◆ **Honduras** provided education on early detection of childhood cancer
- ◆ **Nicaragua** held educational activities on sanitation and household cleanliness
- ◆ **Panama** promoted the importance of good hand washing and **Suriname** emphasized healthy eating habits and daily exercise

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Assessing Public Satisfaction

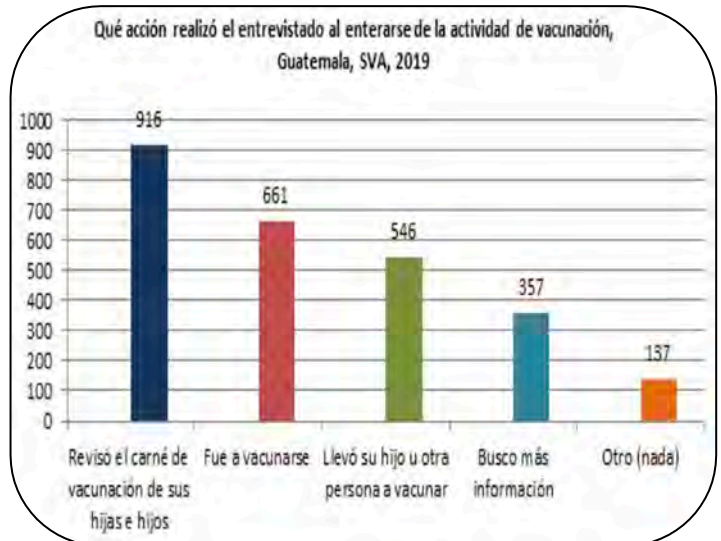
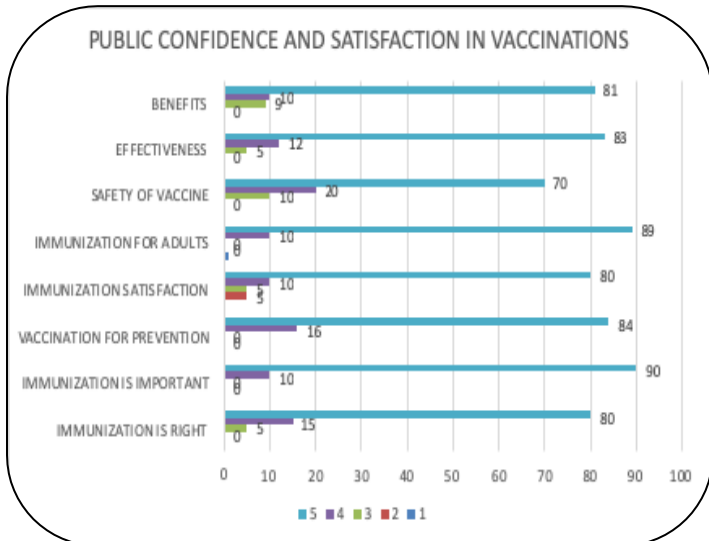
Countries are encouraged to use VWA as a platform to assess public satisfaction and confidence in vaccination. Each year, PAHO provides a template survey that countries may choose to administer. This year, **10** countries reported monitoring & evaluation activities:

Belize, BVI, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, and Paraguay. Some of the findings are described below.

- ◆ **Belize** surveyed 132 respondents, finding the majority agreed that immunization is very important and were satisfied with the services provided at health centers. It was also noted that confidence in vaccine *safety* was not rated as highly when compared to its effectiveness and benefits.
- ◆ **Bermuda** did not administer a survey this year but accomplished preparatory work for the Client Exit Survey.
- ◆ **British Virgin Islands** conducted a sample survey across the four zones of the Territory, receiving 160 respondents. Overall results were positive.
- ◆ **Guatemala** conducted a survey receiving 3,294 respondents. 2,682 (81%) had previously been aware of VWA and 2,514 (76%) knew that special vaccination services were being offered. In response to the question “What action did you take after learning about VWA,” the most common response was

“Review my children’s immunization cards,” (28%) followed by “Sought vaccination” (20%). The survey did not take the opportunity to assess public satisfaction and confidence with vaccination.

- ◆ **Montserrat** reported strong satisfaction with vaccination services
- ◆ **Panama** found that public confidence and satisfaction with vaccination in general ranged between 94 and 98%, however, the satisfaction with services received from health facilities was slightly lower at 86 percent.
- ◆ **Paraguay** observed that public satisfaction increased when the arrival of the influenza vaccine was covered favorably by the media.



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Above, left: Survey results from Belize. Participants were asked to rate various statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Above, right: An excerpt from Guatemala’s survey, in which participants were asked what actions they took after learning about VWA 2019

Thank you for reading!
For more information, or to view previous
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