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News

WHO Executive Board Delegates welcome the draft immunization vision and strategy and the global strategy to defeat meningitis by 2030

[Daniela Urfer](#), World Health Organization, HQ

Forty-eight speakers, including 38 delegates from Member States, three observers and seven non-state actor organizations, took the floor during the 146th Executive Board (EB) discussion on the Global Vaccine Action Plan (GVAP) and two corresponding decisions: “Strengthening global immunization efforts to leave no one behind” and “Meningitis prevention and control”. This marks a historic engagement at the EB on the GVAP agenda and an important step in preparing for the upcoming World Health Assembly (WHA).



Session during the 146th Executive Board.

Delegates welcomed the draft immunization vision and strategy (“[Immunization Agenda 2030](#)”), highlighting the urgency and the critical need to ensure a successor for the GVAP to maintain the momentum and sustain the gains in vaccines and immunization over the next decade.

Additionally, the World Health Organization’s Executive Board formally agreed that the [Defeating Meningitis by 2030 Global Roadmap](#) should be brought before the [World Health Assembly](#) in May 2020.

More information on the [EB GVAP session](#).

Introducing Boost – A global community where immunization professionals connect, learn and lead

[Jennifer Fluder](#), Sabin Vaccine Institute



Screenshot of Boost Community home page.
Credit: Sabin Vaccine Institute.

The Decade of Vaccines has seen immense progress, including the vaccination of [20 million children](#) between 2011 and 2017 alone. The role that immunization professionals around the world play in this and other achievements is undeniable. In the face of rapidly changing environments, and limited resources, the work of immunization managers has never been more important.

The Albert B. Sabin Vaccine Institute has been working to bring partners and global stakeholders together around the common goal of professionalizing the field of immunization since 2013. In an effort to build on this mission, reexamine its approach and bring fresh perspectives to the table, Sabin recently launched Boost, a global community where immunization professionals can connect, learn and lead.

Boost is an on and offline community that acts as a bridge between the field and global actors. By highlighting emerging needs and threats in the field of immunization, and sharing resources that help address them, Boost is transforming how immunization professionals collaborate across the globe.

A note-worthy fact about Boost is that it was developed in close, ongoing collaboration with immunization organizations, experts and professionals and is designed to be responsive to, and reflective of, the changing needs of the immunization field.

The Boost community is supported by a growing network of partners, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, World Health Organization, Clinton Health Access Initiative and others.

Sabin looks forward to what this next chapter holds for the immunization professional community and invites you to join the [Boost community](#).

Past Meetings/Workshops

Fourth Regional Meeting on the Quality and Use of Vaccination and Surveillance Data

[Martha Velandia](#), Marcela Contreras, Robin Mowson, Claudia Ortiz, Paola Ojeda, PAHO-Washington, DC

Location: Punta Cana, Dominican Republic

Date: 25-27 February 2020

Participants: Eighty-nine participants representing twenty-six countries, including Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Purpose: To review the advances and challenges in the use and quality of immunization information systems data, considering information from vaccination systems and the epidemiological surveillance of vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs).

Details: The fourth regional meeting to review vaccination and surveillance data use and quality in the Region of the Americas was held on 25-27 February 2020 in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. Global and regional projects for information systems were also presented and discussed, as well as next steps.



Fourth Regional Meeting on the Quality and Use of Vaccination and Surveillance Data held in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, February 2020. Credit: PAHO/WHO.

The first half of the meeting focused on immunization data quality and use. Countries and partners presented their experiences overcoming challenges with recording and reporting high quality data and discussed potential interventions to improve quality issues. Next, the focus turned to using immunization data for decision-making at all administrative levels of the programme and the importance of using data to strengthen immunization programmes. Participants worked together to establish strategies for improving the use of vaccination data to address relevant challenges.

During the second part of the meeting, an update on the progress with surveillance in the Global Information Systems WIISE project was given. (The WIISE (WHO Immunization Information System) is a collection of applications to collect, manage, analyze and disseminate immunization and VPD surveillance data collected by WHO worldwide.) Additionally, the status of the VPD Regional Surveillance Information System was explained to inform participants of future plans. During the group work, participants were able to identify challenges presented by information systems in the epidemiological surveillance of countries and how they affect the data quality.

The preliminary conclusion of the meeting is that the Region must continue generating high quality data on vaccination and surveillance in order to continue monitoring the progress of achievements related to disease elimination objectives proposed by the Global Vaccine Action Plan and the Regional Immunization Action Plan, as well as measuring the progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. An important next step following this meeting will be to continue working with countries to develop a guide on improving data quality for surveillance systems.

Call for applications

Launch of Teach to Reach Accelerator for immunization professionals involved with training and workforce development

[Jhilmil Bahl](#), World Health Organization, HQ and Reda Sadki and Ian Steed, Geneva Learning Foundation

Since 2016, WHO has offered distance courses to support country adoption and application of global immunization guidance. In the courses, practitioners learn by supporting each other, engaging in collaboration and reflection around WHO guidance materials. They experience new ways to learn, developing critical thinking and writing skills, as well as peer networks.

In 2019, courses on vaccination coverage surveys ("Survey Scholar"), global routine immunization strategies and practices (GRISP Level 1), and inequities (GRISP Level 2) were offered by WHO HQ. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Immunization Unit offered its first Scholar course on Electronic Immunization Registries (EIR).

In July 2019, a pilot "[Impact Accelerator](#)" offered post-course activities. 655 participants from 53 countries committed to taking their course projects based on WHO immunization guidance and turn them into real-world projects in their own context.

The 2020 programme will include:

WHO Scholar Level 2 certification course (French and English) on data triangulation for improved decision making GRISP (updated for Strategy 2030) (French and English)

Level 1 and 2 certification in training for immunization professionals (French and English) as part of the Teach to Reach Accelerator.

NOW OPEN FOR APPLICANTS!!

The Teach to Reach **Accelerator** is a new Scholar programme, now open to all immunization professionals involved with training or workforce development at national and sub-national levels.

You do not need to be a learning or training specialist to participate.

The deadlines for applications are 15 March 2020 ([French](#)).

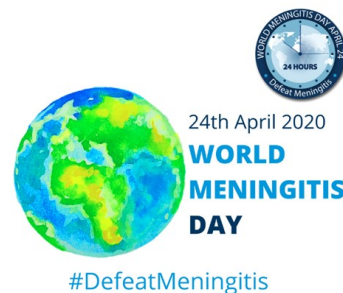
Teach to Reach is being developed by the Geneva Learning Foundation with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).

Resources

World Meningitis Day 2020 Toolkit is Released

[Molly Patrick](#), Confederation of Meningitis Organisations (CoMO)

The World Meningitis Day 2020 [Toolkit](#) has been launched ahead of the global campaign on 24 April 2020. It contains numerous resources useful for awareness-raising activities, including vaccine myth buster infographics, testimonial tiles and fact sheets. This year's theme is "Defeat Meningitis" and the Confederation of Meningitis Organizations (CoMO) will be joining survivors, health professionals, patient advocacy groups and medical organizations all over the world to raise awareness of how we can, and why we must, Defeat Meningitis.



2020 is a landmark year for meningitis advocacy, as the World Health Organization's Executive Board have formally agreed that the [Defeating Meningitis by 2030 Global Roadmap](#) should be [brought before the World Health Assembly](#) in May 2020.

This year's World Meningitis Day will be an opportunity to show support for the global plan and highlight its necessity, as meningitis presents a unique challenge to health systems worldwide.

You can find the toolkit on CoMO's [website](#).

Please send an [email](#) for more information.

PAHO updates Guide on the Surveillance of Bacterial Pneumonia and Meningitis among Children Aged under 5 Years

[Lúcia Helena de Oliveira](#), Gloria Rey Benito, Cuauhtémoc Ruiz Matus, PAHO-Washington, DC

This [manual](#) has become an outstanding reference for health professionals in the Region of the Americas in charge of these surveillance activities. This guide includes descriptions of the diseases, main etiological agents, available vaccines, surveillance and laboratory procedures to identify the bacteria, and data analysis in order to produce pertinent information. This second edition of the original “Surveillance of Bacterial Pneumonia and Meningitis in Children Aged under 5 Years” presents new concepts and updates procedures to reflect the introduction of molecular biology tests and the new vaccines available. The guide is currently only available in Spanish, but there are plans to translate in the future.



2020 Guidelines on reporting and renewal of Gavi support

[Reme Lefevre](#), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance is pleased to announce that the 2020 Guidelines on reporting and renewal of Gavi support will be available on 9 March 2020.

The 2020 guidelines are very similar to the 2019 ones, with the following key highlights:

- **Stock reporting** - countries are expected to provide a minimum of three levels of stock data, including from the central level, by **31 March 2020**;
- **Grant Performance Framework (GPF) country-reported indicators** are expected to be submitted by **31 March 2020**;
- Countries requesting a **renewal of Yellow Fever diagnostics procurement support** have until **15 July 2020** to submit the relevant information through a dedicated country portal section;
- The deadline of **15 May 2020** for the **submission of the vaccine renewal requests** remains unchanged.

The dedicated webpage “How our support works” contains all the guidelines, templates and tools necessary for countries throughout the grant management process. It is available in [English](#) and [French](#).

Gavi has developed a number of eLearning modules on the Gavi reporting and renewal process for countries and those supporting countries. The ilearn platform can be accessed by everyone by signing in to [Gavi's eLearning system](#) and through the [Gavi website](#).

Understanding **Gavi's renewal process**: [English](#) – [French](#)

How to use the Gavi country portal for **vaccine renewals**: [English](#) - [French](#)

How to use the Gavi country portal for **HSS renewals**: [English](#) - [French](#)

How to use the Gavi country portal for **CCEOP renewals**: [English](#) - [French](#)

Understanding **Gavi's reporting requirements**: [English](#) - [French](#)

How to conduct a **Joint Appraisal**: available by 9 March 2020.

For any additional information you are invited to contact the [Gavi Secretariat](#).

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VIEW PREVIOUS EDITIONS

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New publication outlines promising practices for data review teams to strengthen immunization supply chains

[Vidya Sampath](#), VillageReach

A [new publication](#) released by Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), John Snow, Inc. (JSI) and VillageReach presents a synthesis of promising practices and recommendations for EPI data review teams (DRTs) to improve data use and strengthen immunization supply chains.

Well-performing immunization supply chains (iSC) are critical to ensure vaccine availability and rely heavily on data visibility and use to function properly. Although countries have made significant investments in improving data availability, this has not automatically led to increased data use. DRTs are an approach to ensure data are used to make decisions. DRT meetings are an opportunity for stakeholders from across supply chain tiers to review key iSC performance indicators, identify and assess performance issues, and develop actionable solutions.

The new report is intended to help EPI managers, supply chain staff and partners recognize the role of DRTs in system strengthening and inform DRT design and implementation. The report draws on the experience of CHAI, JSI and VillageReach in supporting multiple governments in implementing different types of DRTs. It offers specific recommendations on how to standardize meeting structure and tools, choose team members and orient them to their roles, and nurture teams' motivation and accountability.

Evidence suggests DRTs can have a major impact on stock availability. For example, stock adequacy increased from 67 to 98 percent over the course of a DRT intervention in Kano State, Nigeria. In Pakistan, the average percent of Union Councils with all seven primary routine vaccines in stock each month rose from 34 to 87 percent in intervention districts in a year. In Mozambique, stockouts dropped from 36 to five percent over five years in provinces where DRTs were implemented. Because DRTs are common to many health system strengthening approaches, lessons in building a culture of data use may be relevant to other areas as well.

Immunization Academy expands Video Training Platform

[Alice Bumgarner](#), Immunization Academy

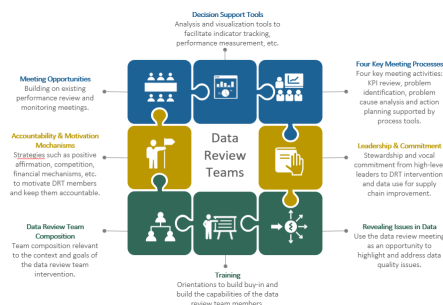
The Immunization Academy, a provider of free training videos for immunization professionals on topics such as cold chain, data monitoring and vaccine delivery since the summer of 2017, relaunched in February 2020 with more tools and functionality. There are now over 45,000 learners in 195 countries, watching ~100 instructional videos in English, French and Swahili.

The most noticeable change is the new name and enhanced website, now called Immunization Academy's [IA Watch](#). IA Watch has the same video lessons developed from World Health Organization-approved guidance, but includes new functionality, such as a credit system that allows users to earn bronze, silver, gold or platinum status for their learning achievements on the site.

Additionally, Immunization Academy has officially launched the IA Watch Android app, which makes it easier than ever to view video lessons offline and on the go. You can download the app through the [Google Play store](#).

More learning tools will be announced this spring, including an assessment tool for uncovering your skill/knowledge gaps, an online learning platform for taking courses, and a manager's tool for tracking the learning of others. This suite of tools will be part of Immunization Academy and free for all learners. The best way to stay current on upcoming products and tools is to register for an IA Watch account on the [website](#).

We would greatly appreciate you taking the time to share the new [IA Watch platform](#) and [app](#) with your contacts, so we can continue to improve the skills and knowledge of immunization professionals around the world.



Key Components of Data Review Team Interventions.

Immunization Summary app has a new look and easier navigation!

[Kristi James](#), World Health Organization, HQ

The Immunization Summary smart phone app is a handy reference for national programme data, indicators and vaccination schedules. Following user feedback and testing, the app has just been released with a new design and easier navigation. Take a look!

New updated features include:

- Compare country data – Use the compare button at the top of the country data and create your own views with multiple countries (see screenshots below);
- View maps and graphs from selected data – each line of country data is clickable. For example, if you click on Measles in a given country, you will see the measles graph for that country, or you can switch to map view and get the world Measles map;
- Share maps and graphs – in one click, you can share maps and graphs in a variety of formats (see screenshots below).



Immunization Summary's new app icon.

The Immunization Summary app visualizes data (tables, graphs, maps) on policies and activities and their impact on national immunization systems. These data are reported by WHO and UNICEF Member States annually for incidence, coverage, immunization system indicators and vaccination schedules. In addition, the app includes WHO and UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage (WUENIC) - an independent technical assessment from 1980 to 2018 that is updated annually.

To download the app, visit your app store and search for: Immunization Summary.



Share information in a variety of formats



	Afghanistan	Bahamas
Population data		
Total population	74,937,964	460,124
Births	759,821	4,484
Surviving infants	752,291	4,475

Compare country data .

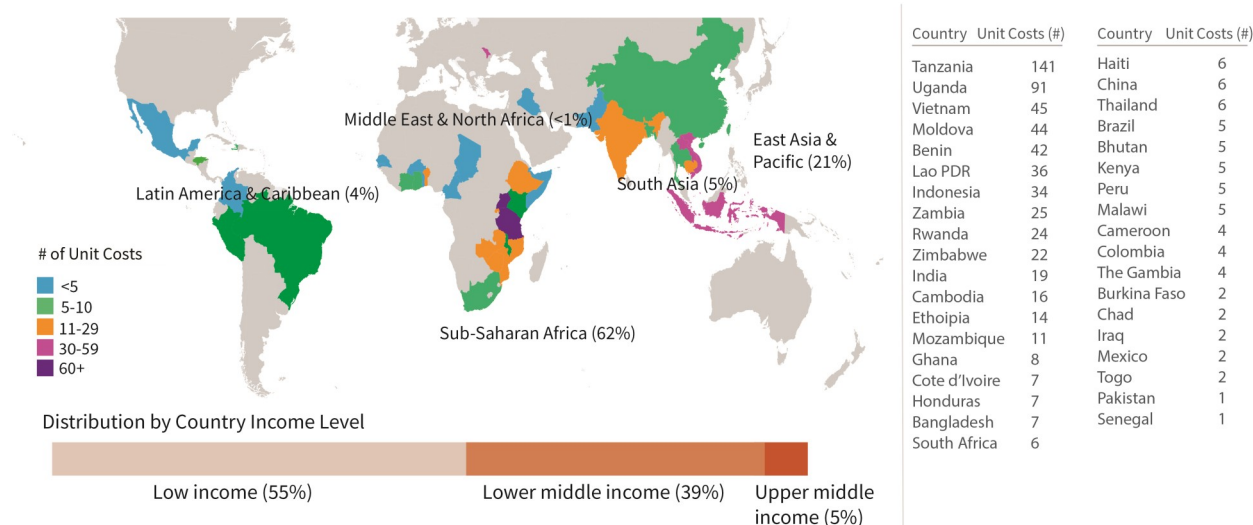
ICAN releases update of the most comprehensive, current, and standardized global evidence on immunization delivery costs

[Michaela Mallow](#), ThinkWell

The Immunization Costing Action Network (ICAN) released new resources on immunization delivery costs (IDCs) in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

First, the ICAN updated the [Immunization Delivery Cost Catalogue \(IDCC\)](#), a repository of unit costs of vaccine delivery across LMICs and through a variety of delivery strategies. The update includes:

- An addition of 50% more IDC data to the [IDCC Excel workbook and web tool](#). The IDCC contains the most up-to-date cost evidence for LMICs published since 2004, converted to 2016 US\$ for easy comparison and use. Over 650 unit costs from 30+ countries are now available. The unit costs represent a variety of vaccines, delivery strategies, types of cost analysis, and contextual settings.



Geographic scope of immunization delivery unit cost findings.

- A [summary report](#) with a descriptive and gap analysis of the data, along with cost ranges that summarize the global evidence on the incremental costs of introducing single vaccines and the costs of delivering a schedule of vaccines.
- A [methodology note](#) to better understand the methodology employed for the systematic review and analytics behind the IDCC.

Second, the ICAN released findings from [costing studies in Indonesia, Tanzania, and Vietnam](#) that compared the cost of different vaccine delivery strategies and provide evidence to address challenges at the top of each country's immunization financing agenda. A suite of resources is available on each country study: an executive summary of methods and findings, a full study report, a summary PowerPoint presentation, and an "Evidence to Policy" plan for how the findings can be used for programme improvement, planning and budgeting, and policy decisions.

The ICAN is a research and learning community working to increase the visibility, availability, understanding, and use of information on immunization delivery costs. The ICAN is facilitated by [ThinkWell](#) and [JSI](#) and is supported by a grant from the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#).

Calendar

2020

March

18-19	Gavi Board Meeting	Geneva, Switzerland
23-25	EPI Managers' meeting for East and South African countries	Addis Ababa, Egypt
23-26	AFRO West & Central Regional Working Group	Bujumbura, Burundi
25-27	Immunization Programme Managers Meeting for the European Region	Istanbul, Turkey
31 Mar-2 Apr	Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization	Virtual meeting

May

17-21	World Health Assembly (WHA)	Geneva, Switzerland
26-27	Gavi Programme and Policy Committee (PPC)	Geneva, Switzerland
27-28	Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety	Geneva, Switzerland

June

22-26	18th Global Measles and Rubella Laboratory Network Meeting	Munich, Germany
30-2 Jul	Africa Regional Immunization Technical Advisory Group (RITAG) meeting	Brazzaville, Congo

July

7-8	Gavi High-Level Review Panel (Vaccine doses for 2021 - all countries)	Geneva, Switzerland
20-23	SEARO Immunization Technical Advisor Group (ITAG)	New Delhi, India

August

25-27	14th International Rotavirus Symposium	New Delhi, India
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Links

Organizations and Initiatives

American Red Cross

[Child Survival](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Polio](#)

[Global Vaccines and Immunization](#)

Johns Hopkins

[International Vaccine Access Center](#)

[Value of Immunization Compendium of Evidence \(VoICE\)](#)

[VIEW-hub](#)

JSI

[IMMUNIZATIONbasics](#)

[Immunization Center](#)

[Maternal and Child Health Integrated Program \(MCHIP\)](#)

[Publications and Resources](#)

[Universal Immunization through Improving Family Health Services \(UI-FHS\) Project in Ethiopia](#)

PAHO

[ProVac Initiative](#)

PATH

[Better Immunization Data \(BID\) Initiative](#)

[Center for Vaccine Innovation and Access](#)

[Defeat Diarrheal Disease Initiative](#)

[Vaccine Resource Library](#)

[Malaria Vaccine Initiative](#)

[RHO Cervical Cancer](#)

Sabin Vaccine Institute

[Boost – A Global Community of Immunization Professionals](#)

UNICEF

[Immunization](#)

[Supplies and Logistics](#)

USAID

[USAID Immunization](#)

[USAID Maternal and Child Survival Program](#)

WHO

[Department of Immunization, Vaccines & Biologicals](#)

[ICO Information Centre on HPV and Cancer](#)

[National programmes and systems](#)

[Immunization planning and financing](#)

[Immunization monitoring and surveillance](#)

[National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups Resource Center](#)

[SIGN Alliance](#)

Other

[Coalition Against Typhoid](#)

[Confederation of Meningitis Organizations](#)

[Dengue Vaccine Initiative](#)

[European Vaccine Initiative](#)

[Gardasil Access Program](#)

[Gavi the Vaccine Alliance](#)

[Immunization Economics resource](#)

[International Association of Public Health Logisticians](#)

[International Vaccine Institute](#)

[Measles & Rubella Initiative](#)

[Multinational Influenza Seasonal Mortality Study](#)

[Network for Education and Support in Immunisation \(NESI\)](#)

[Stop Pneumonia](#)

[TechNet-21](#)

[Vaccine Safety Net](#)

[Vaccines Today](#)

WHO Regional Websites

[Routine Immunization and New Vaccines \(AFRO\)](#)

[Immunization \(PAHO\)](#)

[Vaccine-preventable diseases and immunization \(EMRO\)](#)

[Vaccines and immunization \(EURO\)](#)

[Immunization \(SEARO\)](#)

[Immunization \(WPRO\)](#)

UNICEF Regional Websites

[Immunization \(Central and Eastern Europe\)](#)

[Immunization \(Eastern and Southern Africa\)](#)

[Immunization \(South Asia\)](#)

[Immunization \(West and Central Africa\)](#)

[Child survival \(Middle East and Northern Africa\)](#)

[Health and nutrition \(East Asia and Pacific\)](#)

[Health and nutrition \(Americas\)](#)

Newsletters

[Immunization Monthly update in the African Region \(AFRO\)](#)

[WHO/Europe Vaccine-preventable diseases and immunization \(VPI\) news \(EURO\)](#)

[Immunization Newsletter \(PAHO\)](#)

[The Civil Society Dose \(GAVI CSO Constituency\)](#)

[TechNet Digest](#)

[RotaFlash \(PATH\)](#)

[Vaccine Delivery Research Digest \(Uni of Washington\)](#)

[Gavi Programme Bulletin \(Gavi\)](#)

[Immunization Economics Community of Practice](#)