

A united effort: boosting HPV vaccine uptake

ARMENIA

EPW core priorities and flagships

Promoting health and well-being
The European Immunization Agenda 2030 🇪🇺

WHO collaboration

Health advocacy and promotion
Training and capacity-building

In Armenia, every two days a woman is diagnosed with cervical cancer, and every three days a woman dies from the disease. Nearly all of these cases are preventable with the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. However, since the introduction of the vaccine in 2017, Armenia has struggled with low uptake due in part to misinformation and hesitancy among the public and health-care workers.

In 2022 the Regional Office and Country Office began working with the Ministry of Health to implement a strategy to increase coverage. This included the creation of working groups of gynaecologists, oncologists, paediatricians and epidemiologists. The Regional Office guided the development of trainings and peer-to-peer workshops focusing on building trust in the vaccine among health-care workers, girls and their parents. A key success factor was the teamwork established between WHO, the Ministry of Health, the National Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Yerevan Municipality, and subnational health authorities.

The impact

In 2018 HPV vaccination coverage in Armenia stood at just 8% among the primary target groups. However, by 2023, after the country implemented educational sessions with health workers, including school nurses, coverage had risen to 26%.

Lessons learned

- Engaging health-care workers as opinion leaders is a crucial factor in overcoming public hesitancy towards vaccines.
- Building strong partnerships at local, national and international levels is key to achieving positive public health outcomes.
- Direct engagement with parents and teenagers can prove effective in addressing concerns.

Donors and partners

Ministry of Health; local governments; Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; European Union (EU)



European Region



A 14-year-old girl in Armenia receives the HPV vaccine.
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“WHO’s support was crucial in turning around the HPV vaccine uptake.”

Dr Marine Kirakosyan, Paediatrician at the National Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Armenia

What’s next?

Armenia plans to increase HPV vaccination rates further by expanding successful initiatives such as supporting parents in informed vaccine decision-making, ensuring continuous medical education for health workers, and enhanced health literacy education in schools. The country is working to achieve WHO’s goal to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health issue by 2030.