



Vaccination



In 2007, Haiti launched the largest national vaccination campaign in its history, targeting five million people nationwide, which represented 53% of the country's population. The campaign included the administration of vaccines against polio, measles, rubella, diphtheria and tetanus and provided anti-helminthes treatment and vitamin A. An independent survey undertaken by Center of Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) estimated the coverage at 80 %.

There is a Multi Year Strategic Plan (MYSPP five years) and the objectives are : 1) to maintain the country free of circulation of polio, measles and rubella virus, eliminate MNT and control diphtheria and whooping cough through the improvement of routine and outreach services, epidemiologic surveillance, and the catch up campaigns ; 2) strengthen the safety and efficiency of immunization, while reducing wastages and increasing Expanded Programme of Immunizations (EPI) efficiency through better management of vaccines and of the cold chain; 3) open new perspectives to EPI through a) introduction of pentavalent vaccine; b) integration of vaccination within a comprehensive package of health and nutritional care targeting mothers and children; c) adopting a family focus approach targeting general population for tetanus vaccine and school population for Hepatitis B vaccine; and 4) increase the ownership of the state in the financing and managing of the program.

When the earthquake hit Haiti, the activities planned within EPI were interrupted. Concentration of populations in provisional camps represents major threats of epidemics of vaccine preventable diseases: diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough for example. Presence of thousands of expatriates from all over the world represents also a threat of measles-rubella or polio reintroduction. Many health facilities involved in EPI have been destroyed; others are provisionally out of use; and a new distribution of population has taken place. Moreover, the earthquake affected the already weak capacity of the EPI instances at national and departmental levels to operate.

Activities carried out:

PAHO/WHO provided assistance in the elaboration of the post-disaster vaccination plan of the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MSPP); and in the early identification of funding needs for supplies and equipment required (rapid definition of these requirements allowed purchasing of missing supplies and equipment without delaying activities).

PAHO's Director, Dr. Mirta Roses, visited Fond Parisien and Jimani last 1 May 2010 to launch vaccination activities within the Vaccination Week of the Americas.

The post disaster vaccination plan of the MSPP is being implemented with the support from PAHO/WHO, UNICEF and non-governmental partners.

First, anti tetanus immunoglobulin and tetanus vaccine (bivalent tetanus and diphtheria antitoxin/toxoid) have been delivered to health facilities, through the Program for Essential Medicines and Supply (PROMESS).

Then the MSPP, initiated a targeted immunization campaign, focusing on populations in temporary settlements and addressing in a comprehensive fashion the risks of: 1) EPI preventable diseases (Measles-rubella and diphtheria-tetanus- pertussis vaccines for children under 7 years of age and diphtheria and tetanus for older children and adults), 2) vitamin A deficiency; and 3) helminthiasis. Nearly one million people have already been vaccinated in Port au Prince, Leogane, Gressier, Petit Goave and Jacmel.

The campaign is expected to expand to Grand Goave. PAHO/WHO support to the MSPP post disaster campaign included mobilization of resources (drafting of the Flash appeal and the Emergency Response Relief Fund for Haiti -ERRF-); purchase and distribution of vaccines, supplies and equipments; funding of operational costs; technical assistance. PAHO/WHO is on the ground, not only in Port au Prince but also in Leogane and Jacmel (satellite field offices). PAHO/WHO's support to formulation and implementation of MSPP post disaster vaccination plan were undertaken in close collaboration/coordination with UNICEF.

HAITI

PAHO/WHO's Technical Cooperation
in the aftermath of the earthquake 2010



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Next actions:

- Extension of the post disaster campaign to the temporary settlements of Grand Goave, vaccine coverage monitoring and catch up activities in settlements where vaccination coverage is low are ongoing.
- Dialogue with partners with regards to the support to the following phase of the post disaster vaccination plan (i.e. provision of the package to the total population of affected zones) has already begun.
- Activities aiming at revitalizing routine EPI are being implemented in 10 municipalities of west and South east departments, on behalf of the 2010 Vaccination Week of America and will be expanded soon to the rest of the country.
- Revision of EPI multi year strategic plan in order to take into account the consequences of the disaster (health facilities destructions; living conditions in settlements, as well as funds availability) is in the MSPP short term agenda.