



March 2019

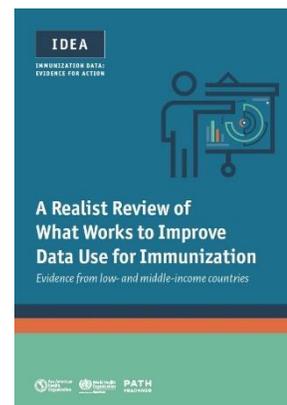
Immunization Data: Evidence for Action (IDEA) review released in English, Spanish & French

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The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and PATH have launched a new report: Immunization Data: Evidence for Action (IDEA), [A Realist Review of What Works to Improve Data Use for Immunization: Evidence from low- and middle-income countries](#). It provides the immunization community with clear, proven strategies for improving the quality and use of immunization data. In addition, it outlines how funders, policymakers, and program implementers can incorporate these best practices to improve the efficacy of state, regional, and national immunization programs.

The report identifies [five proven strategies](#):

1. Strategies that address barriers to immunization should be interconnected and mutually reinforcing;
2. The more data is used, the more likely its quality will improve;
3. Data should be an integral part of health decision-making;
4. Digital information systems should be utilized to provide high-quality data to decision makers in real time;
5. The use of digital systems should be phased to ensure that the proper infrastructure is in place to manage them.



PAHO and PATH conducted a realist review of published and non-published literature to identify these findings. This approach allowed the use of multiple types of evidence, such as experimental and nonexperimental study designs, grey literature, project evaluations, and reports. A majority of the 549 pieces of evidence reviewed was non-peer-reviewed literature, which provided important learnings that more traditional systematic reviews would overlook.

The IDEA review was supported by a steering committee which includes global and regional senior leaders in the areas of immunization, data quality, and use from World Health Organization; US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; United Nations Children's Fund; Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute. As well as country representatives from both the BID Learning Network and the Improving Data Quality for Immunizations project.

For more information on IDEA visit: <https://findyourfinding.org/>.



PAHO Convenes Dual Meetings to Review the Joint Reporting Form and Opportunities to use Geographical Information Systems to Improve Coverage Monitoring

Robin Mowson, Marcela Contreras, Paola Ojeda, Martha Velandia, Claudia Ortiz, Carilu Pacis, Cuauhtémoc Ruiz Matus – PAHO

Location	Mexico City, Mexico
Dates	19-22 February 2019
Participants	The meeting was attended by participants from 23 countries throughout the Americas region, including PAHO focal points, national immunization and epidemiological surveillance authorities, and partners from WHO and UNICEF.
Purpose	The objectives of the meetings were to strengthen the quality of the data reported in the WHO/UNICEF joint reporting form (JRF) as the official source to monitor progress on the Regional Immunization Action Plan (RIAP); and complete a training on the use of geographic information systems (GIS), such as Quantum Geospatial Information Systems (QGIS), to improve coverage and surveillance monitoring.

For two days, PAHO hosted a meeting where the main changes included in the 2019 JRF were presented and reminders were given about the correct completion and the delivery dates. Additionally, discussion took place about different aspects of the material collected and the importance of the data to the program functioning in the Member States, and WHO and UNICEF presented on how data is used globally, how they are working to make JRF data more accessible and how countries can use WUENIC.

PAHO recommends continued support to countries to guarantee the quality of the data reported in the JRF as the official source to monitor the RIAP and the Global Vaccination Action Plan (GVAP). Additionally, promoting use of the JRF as the official source of information for decision-making in countries and periodically reviewing the process for completion, validating the data, and evaluating the quality.



PAHO's JRF and GIS/QGIS workshops in Mexico City, Mexico, February 2019. Credit: Deysi Garcia, PAHO-Mexico.



Next, PAHO led a GIS training, where the basic concepts of GIS and benefits of its use in immunization programs were presented. Practical exercises were carried out with QGIS, an Open Source tool for spatial analysis and mapping. Experiences were shared in the use of GIS to plan, monitor and analyze the performance of immunization programs, with a focus on the impact on improvements in immunization coverage and reduction of inequities. The challenges and opportunities of integrating georeferencing data as a tool in the countries of the Americas were discussed. PAHO supports incorporating GIS mapping into immunization programming, to improve coverage and surveillance monitoring in the countries of Latin America.



PAHO's JRF and GIS/QGIS workshops in Mexico City, Mexico, February 2019. Credit: Deysi Garcia, PAHO-Mexico.

Workshop to Improve Immunization Rates and Equity in Urban and Peri-urban Populations in the Province of Cordoba, Argentina, with a Review of the Provincial EIR system

Robin Mowson, Marcela Contreras, Mirta Magarinos and Martha Velandia, PAHO

Location	Cordoba, Argentina
Dates	25-28 February 2019
Participants	Representatives from the Ministry of Health of Cordoba and Argentina's Ministry of Health were present, as well as municipal health directors, municipal immunization program workers and vaccinators from approximately 30 localities within Cordoba. Representatives from PAHO WDC and ARG were also present.
Purpose	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To review the electronic immunization registry (EIR) of the province of Córdoba and learn about the experience of Córdoba using the system in the 2018 measles campaign; 2. Share lessons learned to improve immunization rates in urban and peri-urban populations and develop strategies to improve access to and use of vaccines; 3. Review, share and document the experiences and strategies related to vaccination in the urban and peri-urban populations of Córdoba, Argentina; 4. Identify effective vaccination strategies especially targeting disadvantaged and marginalized populations in Córdoba, Argentina.

PAHO recently met with the Ministry of Health of Córdoba, Argentina for an introduction to the province's EIR and to learn about the experiences of Córdoba. The context of the health system was presented, emphasizing the challenges that arise due to heterogeneity among the municipalities; geographic and population variability; and coordination among actors given the political and administrative decentralization of Argentina. The information system of the province is quite mature and includes 88% of the health services of the province and includes capabilities for coverage monitoring with the support of geographic information systems.



During the two days of workshop that followed this in-depth introduction to the EIR system, PAHO and the MOH of Cordoba set out to facilitate the sharing of experiences and develop strategies to improve access to and use of vaccines. PAHO's methodology of participatory work on the following topics was carried out: Identification of target populations; Working with partners; and Identifying integrated strategies for the vulnerable populations identified by participants.

Participants expressed their desire to share experiences and strategies to address these target populations, and activities were defined by level of responsibility to be carried out. A greater understanding and characterization of target populations with low coverage would benefit the work in the province and participants want to know what has worked for others, and how these can be implemented in Cordoba.

Next steps to be considered with the province include the need for the EIR system to interoperate with the electronic clinical records, it is observed that the two systems complement each other and are not mutually exclusive. PAHO would like this experience of integration between systems to be documented for posterity. In parallel, the capabilities and functionality of the current system should continue to be strengthened, taking advantage of the lessons learned from the 2018 campaign.



Group photo of workshop on equity and EIR systems in Cordoba, Argentina, February 2019. Credit: Mirta Magarinos, PAHO-Argentina.