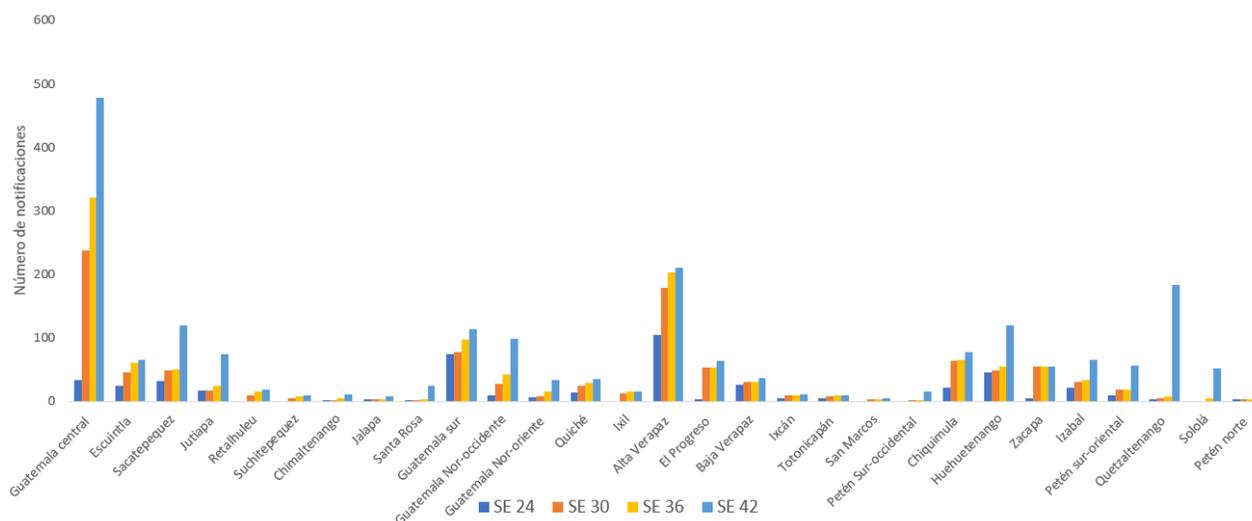




Boosting National COVID-19 Vaccination Activities through Shoulder-to-Shoulder Regional Technical Assistance

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Although COVID-19 vaccination roll-out in Guatemala has advanced steadily since February 2021, important differences in implementation indicators (vaccination coverage, ESAVI [Events Supposedly Attributable to Vaccination or Immunization] surveillance, and advancement of microplanning tools) are seen between health areas. As part of PAHO's efforts to support the Ministry of Health's (MOH) National COVID-19 Vaccination Plan, an initiative combining leadership from the MOH's National Immunization Program, Department of Epidemiology, and Health Care Integrated System (SIAS, in Spanish) was implemented to provide regionally-focused technical assistance in campaign planning, logistics, and ESAVI surveillance to local health areas from July to December 2021. The main objective was to strengthen health areas in rolling out COVID-19 vaccinations, including implementing and complying with technical guidelines.



ESAVI surveillance increased 4.4-fold through implementation of regionalized focal points, from epi week 24/2021 to epi week 42/2021. Focal points began field work in epi week 29, 32, and 34

Following an interdisciplinary approach, 11 regional immunization focal points were trained and assigned to support 1-3 health areas in COVID-19 vaccination-related tasks (76% of health areas covered). Focal points worked shoulder to shoulder with health personnel at health areas and municipal levels to prioritize sites with low vaccination coverage.

Vaccination activities were closely monitored and evaluated to present individual diagnoses by health area in activities related to COVID-19 vaccination microplanning, guideline implementation, and ESAVI surveillance, and point out areas for strategic improvement. Work plans were designed to target these areas and strengthen the communication between



municipal, departmental, and national health authorities, as well as indigenous authorities. Focal points engaged local public and private entities to support vaccination efforts in each health area.

Technical assistance through regionalized focal points has allowed strengthening vaccine delivery efforts at the local level and building capacity that can be expanded into routine immunization programs. Although there are still critical areas to be addressed, having trained personnel specifically dedicated to strengthening vaccination campaigns at local levels can aid in improving outcomes of COVID-19 and routine vaccination implementation activities.



Using Rumor Detection and Scientific Information Mediation to Support COVID-19 Vaccination Communication in Guatemala

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The COVID-19 vaccination campaign in Guatemala was deployed in February 2021 following a phased implementation plan. Vaccination has increased steadily; however, important barriers have been identified by healthcare personnel regarding communication about COVID-19 vaccines.

To support the Ministry of Health's (MOH) communication strategy, PAHO has partnered with local communication firm Comunique to bridge gaps and improve communication at the community level using two strategies: 1) identifying and analyzing misinformation messages, sources, and rumors related to COVID-19 vaccines, and 2) mediating COVID-19-related scientific information for use by MOH healthcare personnel in communicating vaccine-related information.

Using tools such as UReport (<https://guatemala.ureport.in/>), a rumor detection tool supported by UNICEF, and monitoring tendencies in social media, daily reports are generated to communicate trending topics directly to MOH personnel and recommend proactive communication responses. Communication kits with mediated information on specific topics of interest (COVID-19 vaccination in pregnant women and children, specific information about different vaccines, talking points for use with local news reporters, among others) are generated and shared on a timely basis with MOH.

Trainings on how to use these communication kits will be conducted with technicians from 29 health areas in Guatemala during the last week of November 2021. With these strategies, PAHO supports MOH COVID-19 vaccination communication efforts to reduce misinformation and increase vaccination uptake in Guatemala.

MATERIAL DE USO INTERNO
INSTRUMENTO DE MEDIACIÓN
 Vacunación y consideraciones sobre la fe

MATERIAL DE USO INTERNO
INSTRUMENTO DE MEDIACIÓN
 Vacunación durante el embarazo

MATERIAL DE USO INTERNO
INSTRUMENTO DE MEDIACIÓN
 Dudas generales sobre la vacunación contra el COVID-19

Reporte Social Listening
Análisis de mensajes de desinformación y redes sociales

Desglose de datos por Tema

Alertas por Tema	Interacción por Tema	Videos Views por Tema
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desinformación: 15% Procesos: 73% Indefinición: 10% Atención al Pac: 4% Atención al Cliente: 15% Atención: 3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desinformación: 15% Procesos: 23% Indefinición: 2% Atención al Pac: 96% Atención al Cliente: 1% Atención: 20% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desinformación: 23% Atención al Cliente: 23% Atención al Pac: 48% Atención: 2%

TEMA	ALERTAS	INTERACCIÓN	VIDEO VIEWS
Desinformación	6	281	826
Procesos	8	99	0
Atención al Pac	11	178	93
Atención al Cliente	7	2035	0
Atención	12	39	32
Indefinición	62	859	2929
Totales	106	3.471	3.878

LO MAS RELEVANTE

GUÍA PARA CONVERSAR CON LAS PERSONAS SOBRE COVID-19

Pasos previos

- Identificar a las personas con las que se va a hablar. ¿De qué se trata?
- ¿Qué se quiere lograr? ¿Por qué es importante?
- ¿Qué se quiere decir? ¿Qué se quiere hacer?
- ¿Qué se quiere evitar? ¿Qué se quiere evitar?
- ¿Qué se quiere evitar? ¿Qué se quiere evitar?
- ¿Qué se quiere evitar? ¿Qué se quiere evitar?

Sample of documents included in communication kits for use by MOH technicians in health areas in COVID-19 vaccine communication efforts.



Strengthening National COVID-19 Immunization and Surveillance Programs in Guatemala through Timely Data Analysis and Presentation

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Timely access to and analysis of surveillance data is essential for public health decision-making, which is especially important considering the current COVID-19 pandemic. Guatemala began COVID-19 vaccination in February 2021, following a phased implementation plan aligned with the WHO SAGE Roadmap.

Given the national scope, volume and urgency associated with implementing the COVID-19 National Vaccination Plan, it is imperative for the Guatemalan Ministry of Health (MOH) to use data collected through its programs to plan, monitor, and evaluate vaccine roll-out in a timely manner. To support MOH efforts, PAHO-Guatemala has provided technical assistance to strengthen the National Immunization Program (NIP) and the Department of Epidemiology (DE) in automation of data analysis and presentation to inform decision making at the national level.

Technical assistance has been provided through a team of biostatisticians and epidemiologists supporting NIP and DE activities. The activities included designing, developing, and maintaining digital platforms to process, analyze, and present COVID-19 surveillance and vaccination data in Guatemala. This has enabled the NIP and DE to process large quantities of data collected by the MOH daily and provide information to different stakeholders.

In collaboration with healthcare professionals from the DE and NIP, the biostatisticians have developed dashboards to present available data on COVID-19 cases and vaccination rates (see: <https://tablerocovid.mspas.gob.gt/>), with daily reports on vaccine coverage by department and health areas.

A dashboard with COVID-19 vaccine safety data obtained from ESAVI surveillance in country has also been developed. Dashboards have been instrumental in monitoring the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic and implementation of the National COVID-19 Vaccination Plan in Guatemala.