



PAHO Member States Approve the Resolution to Adopt the Plan of Action on Immunization for the Region of the Americas

Martha Velandia, PAHO-Washington, DC

During the Pan American Health Organization's 54th Directing Council held in September 2015, the resolution to adopt the Plan of Action on Immunization for the Region of the Americas (RIAP) was approved. This resolution was the result of an extensive consultation process conducted among those involved in the Region's immunization program as EPI managers, PAHO focal points on immunization, and other key partners, who provided suggestions and observations to align the document with current challenges faced at the national level to achieve progress.



*Dr. Cuauhtémoc Ruiz Matus, Chief of PAHO's Comprehensive Family Immunization Unit, presenting the Plan of Action on Immunization at the 54th Directing Council, September 2015.
Photo credit: Communication Unit, PAHO.*

This Plan of Action 2016-2020 gives Member States the rationale, guiding principles, objectives and indicators that will allow the Region of the Americas to be aligned with the Global Vaccine Action Plan (GVAP) 2011-2020, adopted by the World Health Assembly in May 2012. It also proposes that countries take a more active role in achieving universal health coverage and conduct actions aimed at identifying and addressing the inequities to ensure that the population is protected against vaccine-preventable diseases.

The vision of the Plan is: "the population of the Region of the Americas is protected against vaccine-preventable diseases and the Member States promote universal and equitable access to immunization services, with safe and affordable vaccines throughout the life cycle." This approach will also allow for the integration of immunization with other primary care services, such as birth control, sexual and reproductive health among adolescents, health among the elderly and chronic disease prevention (liver cancer and cervical cancer).

The plan proposes four strategic lines of action for adaptation by the Member States, as is appropriate and taking their context, needs and priorities into consideration:

- a) Sustain the achievements;
- b) Address the unfinished agenda to prevent and control vaccine-preventable diseases;
- c) Face new challenges in the introduction and evaluation of vaccine impact;
- d) Strengthen health services for the effective delivery of vaccination.