



Paraguay Arranges the Sustainability of Vaccine Provision for the Expanded Program on Immunization

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The Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare (MSPBS) in Paraguay and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) conducted an evaluation on sustaining the achievements of Paraguay's Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) on 20-21 October 2016. As part of the evaluation, the country's new National Center for Biologicals was visited and meetings were held with the Treasury, technical secretary of planning and Paraguay's general comptroller.



Participants of Paraguay's EPI evaluation to sustain vaccine provision in the country. Photo credit: PAHO/WHO-PARAGUAY.

A plan for the EPI's continuous improvement was discussed, which includes: a) building the National Center for Biologicals and purchasing cold chain equipment; b) strictly managing the vaccine inventory; c) weekly monitoring of the country's vaccination coverage by district and micro-territories; d) monitoring the factor of vaccine wastage; e) creating situational rooms for the epidemiological situation; f) financing the operational activities in difficult-to-access districts and g) continued training plans for the national team and middle and operational EPI managers.

The advances the EPI has made in the last 3 years include the introduction of new vaccines (HPV, pneumococcal and influenza), transitioning from a maternal/child program into an immunization program for the whole family and the assurance of homogeneous coverage by district and micro-territories.

To ensure the sustainability of these achievements, the MSPBS and PAHO have established a vaccine purchasing and payment plan for 2017 that will guarantee permanent vaccine provision.

More relevant information is available on the MSPBS website (in Spanish):

<http://www.mspbs.gov.py/pai-con-importantes-avances-para-proteger-a-la-poblacion/>



PAHO Immunization GIN Articles

(GLOBAL IMMUNIZATION NEWSLETTER)



Expert Review of PAHO's ProVac e-Toolkit

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Location	Washington, DC, USA
Dates	20 – 21 October 2016
Participants	UNICEF, PATH, Sabin Vaccine Institute, CDC, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Argentina's Ministry of Health, Instituto de Efectividad Clínica y Sanitaria, INSP/Universidad Nacional de Colombia, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of Washington, University of North Carolina, Rutgers, Universidad de Cartagena.
Purpose	PAHO's ProVac Initiative celebrated 10 years of work to promote evidence-based vaccine decision-making this year. The ProVac tools and trainings developed underwent an expert partner review. The objectives included: 1. Review the PAHO ProVac Initiative's tools and approaches for providing technical assistance to countries regarding: Vaccine impact and cost-effectiveness analyses (UNIVAC); Immunization program costing (COSTVAC); Vaccine-preventable disease treatment costing (COSTCARE) 2. Document the methodological strengths and weaknesses of the tools, considering their intended use for capacity-building. 3. Seek guidance from experts in the field on future development and direction for ProVac tools. 4. Share and seek feedback on the ProVac e-Toolkit.

During the meeting, the ProVac eToolkit and the most recent updates of ProVac tools were presented and reviewed.

The ProVac eToolkit was developed to host the cost-effectiveness tools, trainings and methodological guidance created to support country-level decision-making on new vaccines. In future releases, it may also host other tools that are currently undergoing pilot exercises to support countries in their efforts to cost immunization delivery and the treatment of vaccine-preventable diseases in the absence of vaccination strategies, both important inputs to a cost-effectiveness analysis.



Credit: PAHO/WHO

Each individual tool, as well as the Toolkit, was demoed for the participants in order to seek feedback on its purpose and methodology. The main focus of the tool review was UNIVAC, which aims to provide a universal vaccine cost-effectiveness and impact modeling framework. Also, COSTCARE and COSTVAC, disease treatment and program costing tools, respectively, were reviewed.

Experts in attendance provided feedback on the methods, focus and scope, both for the short-term and long-term development of the ProVac tools and eToolkit. Their recommendations emphasized the utility of striking an appropriate balance between robust modeling methods and user-friendly tools for the purpose of capacity-building. Experts encouraged PAHO to build in additional guidance into tools for country users that may access tools via the eToolkit.

The ProVac eToolkit will be launched in January 2017. Meeting reports from this review and others will be available on the site (www.provac-toolkit.com).