World Immunization Week 2013

Protect your world – get vaccinated
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This toolkit is available electronically and can be found at:
World Immunization Week 2013

Protect your world – get vaccinated

World Health Organization
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Origins of the campaign

Immunization Week initiatives began in the WHO Region of the Americas in 2003. The Week was observed simultaneously in WHO’s six regions for the first time in 2012, with the participation of more than 180 countries, territories and areas worldwide.

The World Health Assembly endorsed World Immunization Week during its May 2012 meeting1, alongside the Global Vaccine Action Plan. World Immunization Week – which takes place during the last week in April every year – gives countries and our partners around the world a focused opportunity to raise public awareness of how immunization saves lives – during the same week, every year, in every country. Activities include vaccination campaigns, training workshops, round-table discussions, public information campaigns, and more.

Public health context

Immunization is one of the most successful and cost-effective health interventions and prevents between two and three million deaths every year. Immunization protects against diseases such as diphtheria, measles, pertussis (whooping cough), pneumonia, polio, rotavirus diarrhoea, rubella and tetanus. The benefits of immunization are increasingly being extended from children to adolescents and adults, providing protection against life-threatening diseases such as influenza, meningitis, and cancers (cervical and liver cancers).

However, even now, around 22 million infants are not fully immunized with routine vaccines and more than 1.5 million children under five die from diseases that could be prevented by existing vaccines.

The percentage of infants worldwide being fully vaccinated with diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine is holding steady: an estimated 83% in 2011, compared with 83% in 2009 and 84% in 2010. While this is commendable, further efforts are needed to ensure that people all over the world are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases. More than half of all incompletely vaccinated children live in one of three countries: India (32% of incompletely vaccinated children), Nigeria (14%), and Indonesia (7%).

Strengthening routine immunization in countries with the highest number of unvaccinated and incompletely vaccinated children will substantially reduce the number of susceptible children worldwide and limit the occurrence and spread of outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases.

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The Global Vaccine Action Plan is a roadmap to prevent millions of deaths by 2020 through more equitable access to existing vaccines for people in all communities. It was endorsed by all WHO Member States at the World Health Assembly in May 2012. This comprehensive plan has four mutually-reinforcing goals (see Box 1).

**Overall goal**

The overall goal of World Immunization Week is for more people to be protected from vaccine-preventable diseases.

**Objectives**

We are working with our partners to:

- convince people that immunization saves lives;
- mobilize action to increase vaccination coverage with existing and newly available vaccines in underserved and marginalized communities;
- secure political will to increase support for immunization programmes.

**Target audiences**

We encourage individuals and organizations working at international, regional, national, and community levels, in the public and private sectors and civil society, to coordinate and engage in activities during World Immunization Week.

We hope that our campaign products will be used by people around the world (see Box 2).

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**Box 1: Goals of the Global Vaccine Action Plan**

- Strengthen routine immunization to meet vaccination coverage targets.
- Accelerate control of vaccine-preventable diseases with polio eradication as the first milestone.
- Introduce new and improved vaccines.
- Spur research and development for the next generation of vaccines and technologies.

**Box 2: Groups we want to reach with our key messages**

- Parents of children requiring vaccination
- Unvaccinated adults
- Public health agencies
- Non-health sector government bodies
- Health worker associations
- Community leaders
- Civil society groups
Our network of offices across the world and the ministries of health they support can help do this.

**Slogan**

The global “theme” of the campaign every year is to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against disease. The global slogan of this year’s campaign is “Protect your world – get vaccinated”.

Different countries and regions may select different slogans as appropriate to regional, national and local initiatives and goals.

**Campaign materials**

Our campaign web site is: [www.who.int/world-immunization-week](http://www.who.int/world-immunization-week)


You can show that your activity is part of a worldwide effort by downloading the World Immunization Week visual identity from the site and including it on your materials. You can download the files at: [http://www.who.int/campaigns/immunization-week/2013/visual_identity/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/campaigns/immunization-week/2013/visual_identity/en/index.html)

Links to information on regional initiatives can also be found on the site.

Look out for the following materials on the campaign site in the lead-up to World Immunization Week:

- immunization data by country;
- a fact sheet on immunization;
- feature stories from around the world highlighting how immunization can protect people against diseases and save lives;
- a news release.

**Partnership**

WHO works closely with organizations involved in immunization across the world. Experience has shown the value of partnership across sectors and country borders in increasing access to vaccines.
Key messages

Immunization saves lives

• Immunization prevents illness, disability and death from vaccine-preventable diseases including diphtheria, measles, pertussis, pneumonia, polio, rotavirus diarrhoea, rubella and tetanus.

• Preventive vaccination can protect populations from disease during outbreaks, including after natural disasters.

• During some immunization campaigns, health workers provide protection against other diseases. They provide bednets to protect against malaria and vitamin A tablets to support growth and help combat infections in children.

Protect your world – get vaccinated

• Vaccines have the power not only to save but also to transform lives, giving children a chance to grow up healthy, go to school and improve their life prospects.

• The benefits of vaccines are much greater than the minimal risks. Most side-effects are minor and temporary.

Facts and figures

• Immunization prevents between two and three million deaths every year from diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough) and measles.

• An estimated 83% of infants worldwide received the recommended three doses of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine in 2011 (see Figure 1 for coverage estimates).

• About 22.4 million infants did not receive the recommended three doses of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine in 2011. More than 70% of these children live in ten countries: Afghanistan, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and South Africa. More than half of them live in just three countries (India, Nigeria and Indonesia).

• In 2008, nearly 17% of the 8.8 million deaths in children under five were vaccine-preventable (see Figure 2 for causes).

• The world is closer to polio eradication than ever before. Polio is endemic in just three countries. Eradicating polio will save an estimated US$ 50 billion over the next 20 years, mostly in developing countries.2

• The number of deaths from measles decreased globally by 71% between 2000 and 2011, from an estimated 548 000 to 158 000. In 2011, large outbreaks were reported in both high-income and low-income countries. WHO recommends two doses of the measles-containing vaccine to ensure immunity and prevent outbreaks.3

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2 National governments, WHO, and partner organizations, notably Rotary International, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UNICEF, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, are working hard to ensure that poliovirus transmission is interrupted rapidly.

3 The Measles & Rubella Initiative – a partnership led by the American Red Cross, the United Nations Foundation, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UNICEF and WHO – is working in support of the measles and rubella elimination goals of the Global Vaccine Action Plan.
• By the end of 2011, hepatitis B vaccine had been introduced into routine national childhood vaccination schedules in 93% of countries. About half (52%) of these countries were following the WHO recommendation of giving a first dose within 24 hours of birth.

• By the end of 2011, *Haemophilus influenzae* type B vaccine had been introduced in 91% of countries, pneumococcal conjugate vaccine in 37% of countries and rotavirus vaccine in 16% of countries.

• By the end of 2011, human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine had been introduced in 43 countries. WHO recommends that HPV vaccines are introduced as part of a coordinated strategy to prevent cervical cancer and other HPV-related diseases.

**Figure 1** Global and regional vaccination coverage estimates for three doses of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, 2011

![Figure 1](http://www.who.int/immunization_monitoring/routine/immunization_coverage/en/index4.html)

**Source:** WHO/UNICEF coverage estimates:  

**Figure 2** Deaths due to vaccine-preventable diseases in children under five years

![Figure 2](http://www.who.int/immunization_monitoring/Global_Immunization_Data.pdf)

**Source:** WHO web site http://www.who.int/immunization_monitoring/Global_Immunization_Data.pdf
Get involved

There are many ways to get involved in World Immunization Week. Experience in regional campaigns in the years since 2003 has shown how successful such efforts can be. Here are some ideas.

**Ministries of health**
- Organize vaccination campaigns.
- Distribute posters and leaflets about vaccination to health centres.

**Journalists**
- Write articles about vaccination coverage in your country and what more needs to be done.

**International organizations**
- Join forces to inform your constituents about global vaccination goals.

**Community leaders**
- Organize discussion groups with local populations about available vaccines, their benefits and risks.

**Everyone**

*Get fully vaccinated*
- Check with your local health worker whether you are up-to-date with recommended vaccines. If not, make an appointment to get fully vaccinated.

*Join in local activities*
- Find out what activities are going on in your local area during vaccination week.

**Tell us about your events**

*Through our web site*

Tell us about events that you are organizing. Let us, and others, know about your plans, by sending us the details through the following link:\footnote{Entries will be checked for completeness before posting on the campaign site.} http://www.who.int/campaigns/immunization-week/2013/event_registration/en/index.html

*Through our social media channels*

[Facebook][1] [YouTube][2] [Google+][3]

As we get closer to World Immunization Week, we will be linking to campaign materials through our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/WorldHealthOrganization?v=wall, YouTube channel http://www.youtube.com/who and Google+ https://plus.google.com/+who#+who/posts. You can let us know how you will be involved too.
Follow us on Twitter http://twitter.com/who. Look out for the hashtag #GetVax. Follow our World Immunization Week tweets and retweet those of interest to your own networks.

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