



Position Paper



Name of the country: **India**

Committee Name: **World Health Organization (WHO)**

Agenda: **Reviewing and Discussion upon the implementation of Immunization Agenda 2030 with special emphasis on LEDCs**

Introduction

Immunization, a fundamental aspect of public health, has played a pivotal role in saving countless lives and mitigating the impact of infectious diseases. However, despite significant progress, there remain significant gaps in immunization coverage, particularly in LEDCs, which necessitates our immediate attention and collective action.

The Immunization Agenda 2030 is an ambitious roadmap that seeks to extend the benefits of immunization to every corner of the world. It emphasizes the importance of collaboration, innovation, and sustainable investment to address the barriers faced by LEDCs in achieving comprehensive immunization coverage. By integrating immunization efforts with primary healthcare systems, this agenda aims to strengthen health systems and contribute to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. This ambitious agenda, endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO), aims to ensure equitable access to immunization and reduce the burden of vaccine-preventable diseases worldwide.

This position paper aims to present a comprehensive analysis of the current status of immunization in LEDCs, with a specific focus on India. It will explore the need for urgent action, examine previous efforts, and propose innovative solutions to strengthen immunization systems, increase coverage, and reduce the impact of vaccine-preventable diseases in these regions.

Review and Discussion

India, like many other countries, recognizes the critical importance of immunization in safeguarding public health. With a population of over 1.4 billion, India faces unique challenges in ensuring comprehensive immunization coverage. The impact of infectious diseases is magnified in densely populated regions, underscoring the need to prioritize immunization efforts. LEDCs, with their limited resources and fragile healthcare systems, are often disproportionately affected by preventable diseases. These nations face numerous socio-economic barriers that hinder their ability to achieve optimal immunization coverage. It is crucial that we acknowledge the urgency to address this disparity and work collectively towards a sustainable solution.

Despite multiple constraints, India has achieved considerable success overall in its immunization journey, underlining the significance of commitment, local resources, civil society engagement, and innovative partnerships. The Universal Immunization Program (UIP), initiated in 1985, delivers vaccines to infants and pregnant women, focusing on supply chain, safety surveillance, data quality, and accessibility. Collaborations with Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and civil society partners enhance health workers' skills and promote multi-stakeholder coordination.

After becoming polio-free, India emphasized routine immunization and equity through the National Health Mission. To address inequity, the Mission Indradhanush (MI) Program and Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) were launched. UIP expanded to include additional vaccines like rotavirus, pneumococcal conjugate, inactivated polio, measles-rubella, and Japanese encephalitis, with support from politics, manufacturing, and partnerships.

Technological advancements include eVIN, Vaccine Safety Monitoring, and the National Cold Chain Management Information System. The COVID-19 vaccination drive emphasized the need for rapid digital solutions. India's CoWIN platform emerged as a game-changer, enabling citizens to choose vaccination locations and garnering high community acceptance. Building on this success, India is planning to launch the UWIN application for routine immunization. This initiative empowers individuals to track their vaccination history, choose convenient locations, and links their digital records to the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA), integrating citizens into India's digital healthcare system.

India's experience with COVID-19 vaccination has showcased the transformative power of digital technology in empowering individuals and facilitating informed choices. CoWIN's success has paved the way for the upcoming UWIN application, empowering communities with digital immunization records and flexible service access.

Conclusion

In conclusion, addressing the implementation of the Immunization Agenda 2030 with a special emphasis on LEDCs requires a multifaceted approach, involving collaboration between nations, international organizations, and civil society.

India stands committed to the cause of universal immunization and recognizes the need for innovative strategies to overcome the challenges faced by LEDCs. To further strengthen global immunization efforts, it is essential to promote knowledge sharing, capacity building, and resource mobilization. Collaborative initiatives, such as technology transfer, support for local manufacturing, and enhanced vaccine supply chains, can contribute to bridging the immunization gap.

Additionally, leveraging digital technologies like CoWIN and data-driven approaches can aid in tracking immunization coverage, identifying underserved populations, and tailoring interventions. By investing in research and development, we can drive innovation, ensuring the availability of affordable vaccines for all.

For all countries, it is time to reaffirm the commitment to the Immunization Agenda 2030 and work together to create a world where no child is left vulnerable to preventable diseases. By investing in immunization, we invest in the health, well-being, and future of our nations resulting in a healthier, more resilient world.