Using Qualitative Research to Increase Vaccination Access and Uptake in Under-Immunized Communities

June 8, 2023
Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Speaker presentations
- Q&A (~15 min)
- Closing (~5 min)
Brett Craig, Ph.D.
Technical Officer, Vaccine Acceptance and Demand
VPI, WHO Regional Office for Europe
Closing gaps in coverage through targeted insights and tailored interventions

Brett Craig and Siff Nielsen,
Technical Officers
Coverage gaps in European Region

European Region averts further backsliding in routine immunization but falls short of full recovery

The cancer we can eliminate – WHO/Europe urges Member States to consign cervical cancer to history
Current challenges and observations:

- **Vaccine uptake varies at the subnational level and among population groups**

- **Backsliding did not affect everyone equally**

- **National vaccination coverage figures do not tell the whole story – who is unvaccinated or behind in vaccination, where are they, and what are their barriers to vaccination?**

- **Barriers and drivers for under-vaccinated groups are often different. What worked for most has not worked for the rest.**

- **Local health workers continue to be the most trusted source when it comes to information about vaccination.**

The current challenges point to a targeted approach, zooming in, focusing on closing inequities, working at a local level.
Using targeted insights to close gaps in vaccination coverage

• Qualitative insights research informs how to tailor your programme to reach the un- and under-vaccinated.

• Aim is to integrate the use of targeted insights into the Vaccine Acceptance and Demand strategy within the immunization programme.
Overview of recent insights research in the EURO Region

- 18 countries have conducted targeted qualitative insights studies since 2021
- COVID-19, HPV, and routine immunization most common categories of vaccines due to different target groups and perceptions of vaccines
Analysis of qualitative studies across 10 countries (Dec 2020 – March 2022) clearly shows how programmatic changes, informed by insights, strengthen vaccine acceptance and demand, including:

- **Insights inform programmatic changes**

  - Improvements to vaccination registration systems
  - Tailored trainings for HWs on technical information and on communicating about vaccination
  - New information platforms created to meet public demand
  - Outreach from PHCs for inviting for vaccination, making appointments, resolving concerns of patients.
  - Changes in locations of vaccination services to meet needs and preferences of population
  - Add information on vaccine safety to existing consultation services in PHC on other health topics
A targeted approach to closing gaps in coverage

Use data to define target groups. Start with available data to understand the problem and zoom in on groups experiencing gaps in coverage.

Conduct insights research on identified target groups to identify their barriers and drivers to vaccination.

Design and implement tailored interventions based on insights to close gaps in coverage.
Use data to define target groups

**Who**

is unvaccinated or behind in their vaccinations? Who else can provide insights about the target group?

**Where**

are the unvaccinated or those behind in their vaccinations?

**What**

can vaccine(s) have gaps in coverage?
Conduct insights research on identified target groups

Why

- How do you weigh the risks and benefits of vaccines and vaccine-preventable diseases?
- What information have you used to form your opinion?
- What would help you to recommend MMR vaccination to all eligible children?
- What are caregivers’ reactions to MMR vaccination for their children?
Design and implement tailored interventions

**How to close coverage gaps among these target groups with tailored interventions?**

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<tr>
<th>Barriers/drivers</th>
<th>Examples of specific interventions for HWs and caregivers</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>• Technical trainings for health workers to fill gaps in knowledge on vaccine safety, effectiveness and risks of vaccines and of vaccine-preventable diseases.</td>
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<td><strong>Attitudes and intentions</strong></td>
<td>• Communication training for health workers to have effective conversations about vaccination, risks and benefits, responding to concerns in order to increase acceptance.</td>
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<td><strong>Support from social network</strong></td>
<td>• Engage at community level with village health committees and religious leaders, revitalize their organization and functions as health promoters among peers. Knowledgeable of communities, can identify and target unvaccinated, at-risk members of communities.</td>
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<td><strong>Convenient and safe access to vaccination</strong></td>
<td>• Outreach effort through primary health care facilities to identify all unvaccinated in catchment area and contact them to invite for vaccination and address any concerns.</td>
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Remaining challenges

• Challenges remain with implementation of interventions, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

• Continued focus on HW training is needed
  
  o Findings from across countries show many HWs have knowledge gaps and lack confidence in vaccines
Discussion: opportunities and challenges to closing gaps in coverage

Institutionalizing the use of insights research

1) Based on your previous experience, what is the added value of using targeted insights research to identify drivers and barriers?

2) What changes are needed to enable this work (within the programme, with partners)?
Q&A
Promoting trust in vaccines. Protecting Communities.

Vaccine Confidence Toolkit

Webinar Series

Immunizationmanagers.org/resources-toolkits/vaccine-confidence-toolkit/
“REACHing for Vaccine Equity” Podcast
Episode 4

• Episode 4 features community health leaders from CAI Global and Buffalo Center for Health Equity share how they built vaccine confidence and amplified community voices through local messengers with lived experiences.

• Listen [HERE](#)
REACHing for Health Equity: Navigating Pharmacy Deserts and Vaccines Webinar
Wednesday, June 21 at 2 pm ET

• This series of informative webinars will complement the new iREACH 2023 podcast series, REACHing for Vaccine Equity and will discuss the accomplishments and challenges of working in communities to increase Flu and COVID-19 vaccination rates and explore how these activities intersect with traditional REACH work on decreasing racial and ethnic disparities in chronic diseases and promoting healthy behaviors.

• June’s webinar will focus on Navigating Pharmacy Deserts and Vaccines and feature panelists from American Pharmacists Association and REACH Recipients from Public Health Advocates

• Register HERE
Thank you!

Questions?
Reach us at info@immunizationmanagers.org