

Following the remarkable success of prior Vaccination Weeks, WHO and partners will be celebrating the fourth Vaccination Week in the Eastern Mediterranean Region from 24 to 30 April 2013.

Vaccination Week is a regional annual initiative, coinciding with the second World Immunization Week, to promote immunization through a range of coordinated activities, to which advocacy, education and communication activities are central. The objectives of Vaccination Week are to strengthen communication and disseminate information on the value of immunization, increase community interest and awareness of immunization and improve access to immunization for people in the Region using a combination of innovative approaches.

This year's campaign will be celebrated under the slogan "Stop Measles Now!", with the focus on measles elimination. It aims to increase the visibility of the measles elimination target with policy-makers, partners, the medical community and the public. This year's theme is especially important as all countries of the Region have set the measles elimination target for 2015.

"Measles is a highly infectious, fast-moving disease. Even though safe, effective and inexpensive vaccines are readily available today, measles continues to be one of the leading causes of child mortality around the world, accounting for about 158 000 deaths globally each year," highlights Dr Ala Alwan, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean. "Let us use Vaccination Week 2013 as an opportunity to demonstrate our Region's dedication to protecting our children from measles and our commitment to eliminating measles by 2015."

A variety of activities will be carried out by countries in the Region, including workshops, seminars, media campaigns, celebrations and social mobilization. In addition, countries will expand vaccination services, such as tracking unvaccinated people, extending operational hours, and implementing large-scale vaccination campaigns and Child Health Days to deliver an integrated package of life-saving health interventions.

As part of the Vaccination Week celebrations, a regional inaugural ceremony on 22 April 2013 in Cairo, Egypt, will signal the start of Vaccination Week in the Region, under the patronage of the Ministry of Health and Population of Egypt.

Immunization is one of the most successful and effective health interventions; it has reduced morbidity and mortality across the world in a safe and cost-effective manner. From infants to senior citizens, immunization prevents debilitating illness, disability and death from vaccine-preventable diseases. Moreover, the benefits of immunization are increasingly being extended to adolescents and adults, providing protection against life-threatening diseases, such as hepatitis, influenza, meningitis and cancers that occur in adulthood.

The WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean provides technical support to countries participating in the initiative, including the development, planning and production of advocacy tools to assist national health authorities in organizing and implementing relevant health promotion activities according to national health goals and current epidemiological evidence. Regional and national partners, including UNICEF, also provide invaluable support in the implementation of the Vaccination Week initiative.

[Vaccination week](#)

Sunday 24th of August 2025 04:48:41 PM