



28 September 2023, Amman, Jordan – The measles-rubella (MR) vaccine, provided for targeted children in Jordan, is safe and effective at protecting children from deadly disease and outbreaks, said the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which support the Ministry of Health's national immunization campaign.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the rate of measles vaccination coverage in Jordan has declined alarmingly. Approximately 112 000 children under 5 years of age – more than 6 out of 10 children in this age group – have missed their routine doses of measles-containing vaccine. The high number of unvaccinated individuals has already led to an outbreak of measles in Jordan, in April 2023, when 163 measles cases were reported in 7 governorates.

“Measles is a deadly and highly contagious disease, which is easily prevented through vaccination, but to create herd immunity and shield our communities, it is critical that we achieve vaccination coverage of 95% or higher for 2 doses of the vaccine,” said Dr Jamela Al-Raiby, WHO Representative to Jordan.

“Vaccines are one of humanity's greatest and most remarkable success stories – eliminating diseases and saving countless children's lives. Building back immunity in Jordan through routine immunization and catch-up campaigns will help protect children and prevent the public health system becoming overwhelmed with outbreaks,” said Philippe Duamelle, UNICEF Representative to Jordan.

The MR vaccine used is procured on the global market from the Serum Institute of India (SII). In 2022, SII accounted for approximately 236 million doses of MR vaccines shipped globally, representing about 80% of all MR vaccines used worldwide. SII is one of only 2 companies prequalified by WHO to make and distribute this vaccine; 81 Member States across the globe are using the SII MR vaccine.

The WHO prequalification means that the vaccine meets global standards of quality, safety and efficacy. WHO follows rigorous standards, encompassing potency, thermostability, presentation, labelling and shipping conditions, which are met and maintained through regular re-evaluation, site inspection, targeted testing and investigation of any product complaints or adverse events following immunization.

WHO recommends using MR vaccines for outbreak response immunization in measles or measles/rubella outbreaks for countries that include rubella vaccine in their national routine immunization programme (1).

Since 2021, UNICEF has procured over 436 million doses of MR vaccine, benefiting 57 countries around the world.

To respond to the threat of measles, the Ministry of Health, with the support of WHO and UNICEF, developed a comprehensive measles outbreak response plan; a key component is supplemental immunization activities for the MR vaccine.

Both United Nations agencies reiterated their commitment to the Ministry of Health to support their shared goals to strengthen the primary health care system, provide health workers with the resources and support they need, and deliver life-saving vaccines to children.

For more information: <https://www.who.int/health-topics/vaccines-and-immunization>

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1. [Measles outbreak guide.](#)
Geneva: World Health Organization; 2022

Sunday 28th of April 2024 06:17:56 AM