

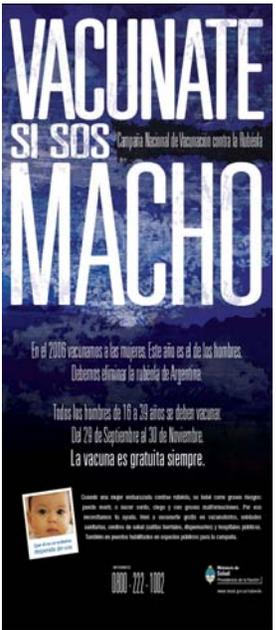


Rubella Watch is an electronic publication disseminated bimonthly by the Comprehensive Family Immunization Project of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization (WHO). *Rubella Watch* is a supplement to the *Immunization Newsletter* published by PAHO. The purpose is to provide you with the most up-to-date information and strategies which guide the rubella and congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) elimination initiative currently underway in the Americas.
The goal: eliminate rubella and CRS in the Region by 2010!

News from October 2008

“If you’re a man, get vaccinated:” Argentina is going for rubella and CRS elimination

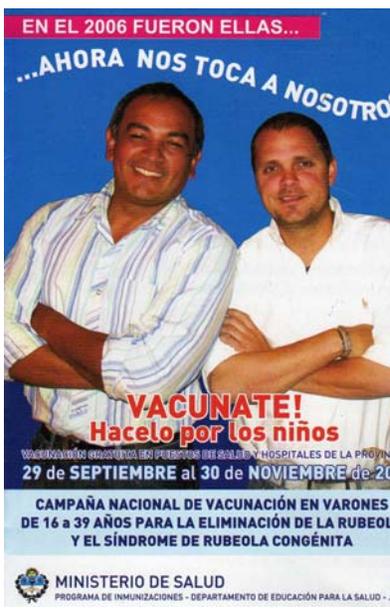
Once again, Argentina has demonstrated extraordinary creativity to rally its people to get vaccinated against rubella during a campaign which targets nearly 6.5 million men aged 16-39 years. Bold posters and other communication materials were prepared by the Ministry of Health and provinces to attract the greatest number of men possible to the fixed and mobile vaccination posts during the campaign in October and November. The campaign launching event was presided over by the Minister of Health, Dr. Graciela Ocaña, accompanied by leaders of scientific societies, NGOs, and religious and civil entities. In 2006, Argentina implemented a national rubella vaccination campaign reaching more than 6.7 million women aged 15-39 years. In addition, close to 1.3 million men considered at high-risk for contracting and spreading rubella virus were vaccinated, such as health workers, armed forces and security personnel, and prison workers. Through this second national campaign, Argentina will eliminate rubella and congenital rubella syndrome (CRS), in accordance with the Regional goal to eliminate the disease by 2010.



National poster – Ministry of Health



Poster – La Rioja Province



Poster – Jujuy Province



Poster- Neuquén Province



Poster- Misiones Province



Poster –Santiago del Estero Province

Why are even the most “macho” of men being vaccinated against rubella?

The vaccination of men, young and old, has been one of the biggest challenges confronted by the rubella and CRS elimination initiative, given that this population is not traditionally the focus of vaccination interventions and does not regularly access health services. For this reason, it was imperative to use innovative social communication messages and novel vaccination tactics in order to reach the largest quantity of men possible through vaccination interventions. These new tactics have included the following:

- Vaccination in places of high population concentration such as concerts, soccer stadiums, beaches, commercial centers, bars, after-hour establishments, gymnasiums, bus stops, etc. These activities have ensured that mobile posts are located in places during days and hours that are convenient to the target population, such as during weekends and rush hour (5-8pm).
- Vaccination in labor centers, schools, and universities to reach captive populations.
- The participation and invaluable support of sport icons, particularly soccer players, as the face of campaigns in their respective countries, has been vital to engage men in vaccination activities.
- The active participation and support of mayors, chiefs and/or community and religious leaders has facilitated the acceptance of vaccination teams in the community.
- Door-to-door vaccination is an essential strategy for reaching rural and hard-to-access areas.



Fans of the popular singer Claudia Leite visit the vaccination post located in Varzea Grande, Matto Grosso, Brazil, minutes before the concert begins.

PAHO/WHO recognizes high coverage attained during the rubella campaign in Mexico

The PAHO/WHO Representative in Mexico, Dr. Philippe Lamy, presented certificates of recognition to the First Lady of the Nation, Margarita Zavala, to the Secretary of Health of Mexico, Dr. José Ángel Córdova, and to the Governor of Zacatecas, Amalia García Medina, for the excellent coverage obtained during the National Vaccination Campaign against rubella and CRS conducted from March-May 2008. Dr. Lamy commented that Mexico joined the countries that are rubella-free by vaccinating more than 22 million people during the campaign, surpassing the national goal. The campaign took place in 32 states of the Mexican territory and targeted men and women aged 19-29 years. Lamy also recognized the invaluable contributions of health workers, particularly at the state level, as well as the collaborative work between different governmental entities. During the final stage of the elimination initiative, the Mexican Republic will continue to work with the same tenacity and intensity to compile and analyze the necessary information to achieve the certification of the interruption of endemic measles and rubella virus transmission in the Region.



National authorities and representatives from the State of Zacatecas participate in the recognition ceremony.

Upcoming Events

Progress towards Rubella Elimination in the Americas: Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association

25-29 October 2008 – San Diego, USA

25th Meeting of the Caribbean Expanded Program on Immunization Managers

17-21 November 2008– Bahamas

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