



Vaccine

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/vaccine



Foreword



Strong national immunization programs in the Americas have paved the way for the elimination of vaccine preventable diseases, while simultaneously strengthening the capacity and infrastructure of national health systems. Globally, vaccines together with other public health interventions have also greatly reduced childhood mortality. In an effort to sustain these advances, the World Health Assembly approved the Global Vaccine Action Plan (2010–2020), which aims to ensure the delivery of vaccines to all peoples. While this aspirational goal may be more easily achievable in the Americas, other Regions continue to struggle to improve vaccination coverage and overall health systems strengthening in support of immunization services. It is evident that robust, transparent decision-making structures and processes are essential to aid policymakers in reaching the best possible decisions with respect to new vaccine adoption and other associated technical issues.

Over the last ten years, the Pan American Health Organization's ProVac Initiative has worked with countries to promote the development and use of evidence as the basis for decision-making regarding new vaccine introduction. In weighing introduction decisions, the ProVac Initiative has collaborated with national multidisciplinary teams from Ministries of Health to develop needed information on the cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit that new vaccines could offer. More recently, ProVac has supported countries

to acquire a better understanding of the investment requirements as well as the running costs to support sustainable vaccine introduction, over the short, medium and long-term.

To celebrate ProVac's ten-year anniversary, this supplement features country-led research to support real-time policymaking, including, inter alia, cost-effectiveness, program costing, and analyses of financial flows. It highlights the work undertaken by partner organizations collaborating in the ProVac International Working Group, as well as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-led Expanded Program on Immunization Costing and Financing (EPIC) project. Leading researchers and policymakers have contributed perspectives on the challenges and opportunities in this area.

We are very pleased to publish this second supplement with *Vaccine* on useful data for policymakers and program managers in the immunization community.

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