



Vaccination given by a nurse in Bangkok, Thailand. © IOM 2017/Benjamin Suomela

IOM has provided migration health assessment services at the request of receiving country governments since 1951. Vaccinations within migration health assessments are provided for refugees and migrants both routinely and in response to outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs).

Unlike post-arrival vaccination, vaccination programmes prior to departure help ensure smooth settlement and integration, especially for children who will need a smaller number of vaccines before they can enrol in school and offer better cost-efficiency and vaccination coverage. They also aid in the prevention of outbreaks and cancellation of movements for refugees in the resettlement pipeline and heighten individual protection - especially important in the context of recent outbreaks of VPDs worldwide.

IOM has worked with receiving country partners, such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States, to build a comprehensive vaccination programme, introducing vaccination against many vaccine-preventable diseases early in the migration process.

This activity is expanding, with more vaccines being introduced into vaccination schedules and more receiving country governments recognizing the benefits of pre-migration vaccinations each year.

## 2019 Key Figures<sup>1</sup>



More than 445,000 doses of vaccine



Against more than 15 vaccine preventable diseases<sup>2</sup>



To approximately 141,000 individuals prior to departure



In over 80 countries of health assessment

<sup>1</sup>As of 9 June 2020

<sup>2</sup>Diphtheria, Haemophilus influenzae type b, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, human papillomavirus, influenza, Japanese encephalitis, measles, meningitis, mumps, pertussis, pneumococcal infection, polio, rotavirus, rubella, tetanus, varicella, yellow fever.

In 2019, IOM provided vaccinations to migrants traveling to Argentina, Australia, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

## ELEMENTS OF IOM PRE-MIGRATION VACCINATION ACTIVITIES



1. Schedule appointments



2. Review medical records, including verified vaccination records



3. Provide counselling and health education, including information about VPDs and vaccinations



4. Obtain informed consent



5. Conduct physical examination, including review of contraindications for vaccinations



6. Conduct immunity testing for certain diseases



7. Administer vaccinations and provide observation for adverse effects



8. Record doses provided\*



9. Additional doses for refugees may be provided after initial health assessment according to recommended vaccine intervals

### OTHER ACTIVITIES



Vaccine stock management



Pre-departure surveillance and outbreak response

\*Records provided to migrants and receiving countries

IOM's pre-migration vaccination activities aim to improve the health of migrants by increasing coverage rates of key vaccines, particularly for refugees over 5 years old who are not covered by traditional immunization programmes. Refugees and migrants are counselled on the benefits and risks of vaccines, as well as risks of the relevant vaccine-preventable diseases, and are provided with health education materials, in addition to records of vaccinations received. The provision of immunization health education improves the uptake of vaccines pre-migration, as well as post-arrival, by encouraging refugees to complete catch-up schedules recommended in receiving countries.

Vaccinations reduce the risk that refugees and migrants arrive in their destination countries with vaccine-preventable diseases, which may cause outbreaks. By sharing vaccination records with receiving country partners, the potential for over-vaccinating or unnecessary immunity testing following arrival is reduced, and the confidence of receiving communities and health providers in the pre-migration health interventions is increased.



IOM nurse with a young migrant and her mother following vaccination in Bangkok, Thailand. © IOM 2018



IOM medical staff providing vaccination in Jijiga, Ethiopia. © IOM 2018



## QUALITY AND SAFETY OF IOM'S PRE-MIGRATION VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Delivering vaccination services in many settings where IOM works - particularly in remote locations or in countries with weak infrastructure - requires a robust vaccine procurement and distribution framework to ensure that IOM is able to reliably source appropriate vaccines and make them available, while maintaining proper cold chain throughout procurement, transportation and storage.

In coordination with partners, IOM established such a framework supplying field operations with cold chain equipment, such as cold boxes, ice-lined refrigerators, digital thermometers, temperature data loggers and generators. Temperature monitoring and alert systems are in place in case of power outages, including standard operating procedures (SOPs) for emergency retrieval.

IOM procures vaccines for its migration health assessment programmes from reputable manufacturers and distributors, following local and international guidelines for vaccine procurement. The availability of vaccines for the programmes are determined by which vaccines are registered in each country by the national drug and pharmacy boards. IOM prioritizes the procurement of WHO pre-qualified vaccines for the programmes, as well.



IOM staff in Bangkok, Thailand stocks a cold box with vaccines. © IOM 2018

IOM has established a global vaccine inventory management system, the IOM Immunization Management System (IMS), which monitors the procurement, consumption or wastage of every dose in each implementing mission. The ability to track the consumption of the vaccines allows IOM to monitor and ensure the quality of the vaccines that it administers. In addition to the IMS, IOM has developed quality control tools that monitor the doses provided to each migrant and assist in determining if recommended doses, time intervals and vaccine schedules are followed correctly. A global standard operating procedure (SOP) for the IOM vaccination programme is also available for each country to adapt to their context.

IOM staff are provided with ongoing training to deliver vaccinations in line with international standards. Training is an integral part of maintaining an international quality vaccination programme. Staff are trained on vaccine handling, administration, management of adverse effects, maintenance of cold chain, vaccination-related health education and other topics. Trainings are provided by a network of international specialists, as well as global and regional vaccination coordinators.



## KEY FRAMEWORKS FOR ASSISTANCE

Vaccination services within IOM's migration health assessment programmes form part of the Organization's work to facilitate migration and support the right to the highest attainable standard of health.

In line with the IOM Migration Governance framework (MiGOF), IOM works with governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil societies and migrants to achieve safe, orderly and dignified pathways of migration and to advance the human rights and socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society. The MiGOF's principles and objectives as they relate to facilitated migration and healthy arrival are aligned with the goals and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, SDG targets 3.3 and 3.B.



Counselling on vaccinations at the IOM Migration Health Assessment Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. © IOM 2018



IOM nurse preparing to give a vaccination at the IOM Migration Health Assessment Centre in Nairobi, Kenya. © IOM 2018



Oral vaccination provided at the IOM Migration Health Assessment Centre in Amman, Jordan. © IOM 2018

For more information on the above activities please contact the Migration Health Division (MHD) at [mhddpt@iom.int](mailto:mhddpt@iom.int)

