

Current major event

Communicating about COVID-19 vaccines

Communicating accurately and effectively about COVID-19 vaccines will help instill confidence among the general public and address vaccine hesitancy wherever it may arise. WHO and partners have released several communication tools and products to assist communication experts with this task as COVID-19 vaccines start rolling out across the world.

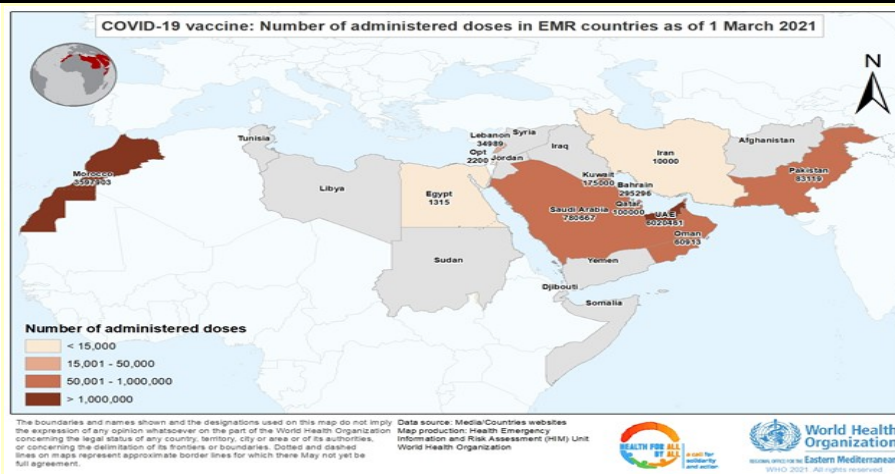
Editorial note

Public health and social measures implemented by countries worldwide limit the spread of COVID-19, but have also caused fatigue among world populations as they impact their social and economic well-being. The rollout of COVID-19 vaccines as a safe and effective tool against the disease has consequently been welcomed by most people as offering a path back towards normalcy. But there are still those who express hesitancy towards taking the vaccine for a variety of reasons, something that may put their health and lives at risk while at the same time possibly preventing countries and the world from achieving the required immunity to end the pandemic.

WHO and partners have therefore prepared and released a number of guidance documents, communication products and tools that can help communication professionals explain how vaccines work, how to generate demand and how to communicate about their safety so that people can make informed decisions.

To understand vaccines, WHO published a series of vaccine explainers that demystify some of the science behind vaccination for the general public. The series address how vaccines work; how they are developed; the manufacturing, safety and quality control measures taken for vaccines; the different types of COVID-19 vaccines; the fair and equitable access to limited supplies of the vaccine; and the effects of the variants on vaccine efficacy. More explainers continue to be produced accompanied by visual aids.

To generate demand for the COVID-19 vaccines among high risk groups in a short period of time, it is vital to ensure



WHO's 'Vaccines Explained' series

Articles in the series

- 1 March 2021: The effects of virus variants on COVID-19 vaccines
- 19 February 2021: Country readiness for COVID-19 vaccines
- 12 January 2021: Access and allocation: how will there be fair and equitable allocation of limited supplies?
- 12 January 2021: The different types of COVID-19 vaccines
- 8 December 2020: Manufacturing, safety and quality control of vaccines
- 8 December 2020: How are vaccines developed?
- 8 December 2020: How do vaccines work?

vaccines are valued, trusted, easily available and actively sought out. The Country Readiness and Delivery (CRD) workstream of the COVAX partnership designed tools to respond to these challenges and support planning and implementation for COVID-19 vaccination. They offer practical guidance on a range of areas, from planning, to data gathering and evaluation, to specific strategies for community engagement and managing rumours and misinformation.

On vaccine safety communication, and under the umbrella of the Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety (GACVS) to address pharmacovigilance preparedness for COVID-19 vaccines, the "COVID-19 vaccines: safety surveillance manual" was published with a chapter addressing "COVID-19 vaccine safety communication". This chapter includes a description of factors that influence people's perceptions of vaccine safety, case studies of past experiences with previous pandemics and vaccine safety issues, a synthesis of evidence and recommendations for risk communication, hypothetical scenarios that apply these recommendations to the COVID-19 vaccine context, and criteria for prioritizing responses to vaccine safety issues.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

COVID-19 in 22 EMR countries

Current public health events of concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): 2019-2021

Afghanistan	[55 985 (2459), 4.4%]
Bahrain	[130 404 (481), 0.4%]
Djibouti	[6252 (63), 1%]
Egypt	[190 280 (11 256), 5.9%]
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	[1 739 360 (61 142), 3.5%]
Iraq	[754 318 (13 719), 1.8%]
Jordan	[469 000 (5285), 1.1%]
Kuwait	[280 460 (1165), 0.6%]
Lebanon	[415 362 (5334), 1.3%]
Libya	[144 993 (2386), 1.6%]
Morocco	[488 632 (8718), 1.8%]
occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)	[234 449 (2494), 1.1%]
Oman	[145 257 (1600), 1.1%]
Pakistan	[605 200 (13 508), 2.2%]
Qatar	[169 767 (265), 0.2%]
Saudi Arabia	[382 059 (6563), 1.7%]
Somalia	[8946 (349), 3.9%]
Sudan	[30 873 (1940), 6.3%]
Syrian Arab Republic	[16 401 (1094), 6.7%]
Tunisia	[241 257 (8359), 3.5%]
United Arab Emirates	[424 405 (1388), 0.3%]
Yemen	[2775 (684), 24.6%]