

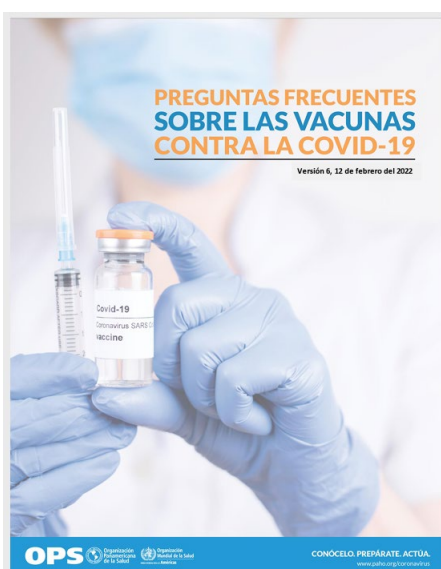
# COVID-19

PAHO/WHO Response. 25 February 2022. Report n. 71

## HIGHLIGHTS

On 15 February 2022, **PAHO reached 100 million COVID-19 vaccine doses delivered to Latin America and the Caribbean** thanks to the efforts of the Organization's Revolving Fund and COVAX, the procurement and delivery partner in the Region. The PAHO Revolving Fund is the designated procurement agency for COVAX in the Americas. Leveraging over four decades of experience in vaccine procurement, the Revolving Fund has now supplied 100 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to 33 countries. PAHO coordinated deliveries with other COVAX partners and supported international logistics to ensure the safety and timely delivery of vaccines. To complement efforts by COVAX, in August 2021 PAHO also launched an initiative for additional access to COVID-19 vaccines in the region by entering into Long-Term Agreements with three manufacturers. According to PAHO's Director Dr. Carissa F. Etienne, the 100 million doses are a very important milestone, and stated that "Thanks to close coordination between COVAX and our Revolving Fund, and the generous support of partners that helped our region secure doses when supply was limited, our countries are better placed to get shots into arms and protect their populations, including the most vulnerable."

PAHO updated a publication containing answers to frequent questions about vaccination against COVID-19. The document answers questions regarding vaccine safety, adverse events, efficacy, among others. It also discusses the different phases a vaccine must go through to obtain approval and provides information on Variants of Concern and COVID-19 vaccine immunity. Launched in Spanish, this is the sixth version of **Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 vaccines**, made available on 22 February 2022. The publication further strengthens PAHO's efforts to build trust in vaccines, reduce vaccine hesitancy and combat misinformation.



## SITUATION NUMBERS IN THE AMERICAS

as of 25 February 2022 (15:00)

**56**

Countries and territories affected

**146,713,033**

Confirmed cases

**2,623,459**

Deaths

**1,678,353,441**

Vaccine doses administered

## RESPONSE PILLARS



1. Coordination, Planning, Financing, and Monitoring



2. Risk Communication, Community Engagement & Infodemic Management



3. Surveillance, Epidemiological Investigation, Contact Tracing; Adjustment of Public Health/Social Measures



4. Points of Entry, International Travel & Transport; Mass Gatherings



5. Laboratories & Diagnostics



6. Infection Prevention & Control; Protection of the Health Care Workforce



7. Case Management, Clinical Operations, & Therapeutics



8. Operational Support & Logistics; Supply Chain



9. Strengthening Essential Health Services & Systems

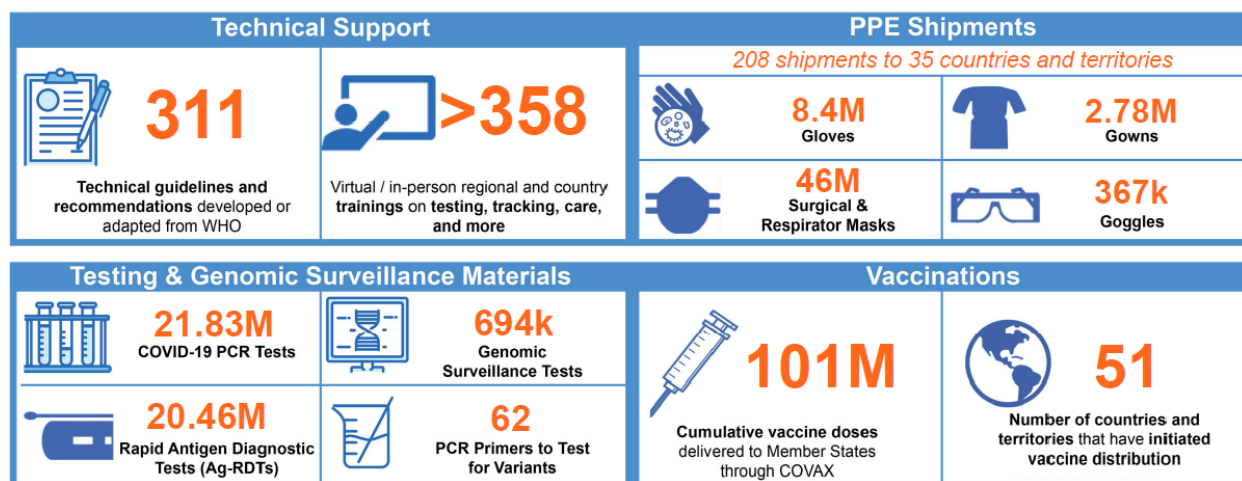


10. Vaccination

**Link to PAHO's technical and epidemiological reports, guidance, and recommendations**

**Link to global operational situation reports**

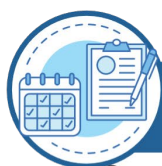
## PAHO Regional Response Summary



Cumulative regional response data as of 25 February 2022.

### PAHO/WHO Response (12 to 25 February 2022)

Following an outbreak of a novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China, rapid community, regional and international spread occurred with exponential growth in cases and deaths. On 30 January 2020, the Director-General (DG) of the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) under the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005). The first case in the Americas was confirmed in the USA on 20 January 2020, followed by Brazil on 26 February 2020. Since then, COVID-19 has spread to **all 56 countries and territories in the Americas**. On 17 January 2020, the Pan American Sanitary Bureau activated an organization-wide Incident Management Support Team (IMST) to provide its countries and territories with technical cooperation to address and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These efforts align with the ten pillars of the 2021 WHO Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19, PAHO's Response Strategy and Donor Appeal, and PAHO Resolution CD58.R9 approved by its Member States. Since then, the Organization has developed, published, and disseminated evidence-based technical documents to help guide countries' strategies and policies to manage this pandemic.



## PILLAR 1: Coordination, Planning, Financing, and Monitoring

Support activation and operation of national public health emergency management mechanisms, as well as COVID-19 planning and response, based on a whole-of-government and inclusive whole-of-society approach

### Regional

PAHO continued to collaborate with its partners within the Region and across the globe to deliver technical cooperation, evidence-based guidance, and recommendations, and to advocate for the Americas on the global stage. PAHO's regional IMST also provided support and strategic guidance to country-level IMSTs as they coordinated and monitored their national response activities.

PAHO continued to review new and emerging information to build the evidence base to combat the virus. The public has access to PAHO's **COVID-19 Technical Database** for technical guidelines, scientific

publications, and ongoing research protocols from the Region. This is the result of partnerships with WHO, Cochrane, McMaster University, Epistemonikos, and others.

## PILLAR 2: Risk Communication, Community Engagement (RCCE)

Support participatory development and implementation of RCCE plans and dissemination of risk communication information to all populations and to travelers

### COVID-19 Courses Available on PAHO's Virtual Campus for Public Health (SPA-POR)

Introduction to the COVID-19 Vaccine: Guidance for Identifying Priority Groups and Developing Microplanning (SPA)

COVID-19 Vaccination Training for Healthcare Personnel – 2021 (SPA, POR)

Vaccination for COVID-19: technical protocols and procedures – Brazil 2021 (POR)

Occupational Health and Safety for Healthcare Professionals in the Context of COVID-19 – 2020 (SPA, POR)

*The full list of courses is available on the [PAHO website](#).*

PAHO's Director, Dr. Carissa F. Etienne, delivered two press briefings during this period. On **16 February 2022**, the Director stated that complacency around mask wearing, travel, and indoor gatherings created a perfect opportunity for the new Omicron variant to spread rapidly throughout the region and increase deaths. "Every time infections surge, there is a heavy toll for our families and communities, with peaks in cases followed by peaks in deaths three weeks later," she alerted. More than half of deaths in the latest surge occurred in people over the age of 65 but many others occurred among those yet to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The PAHO Director also warned that unvaccinated people of all ages still fill up hospitals and ICU beds. Next, Dr. Etienne celebrated that PAHO's Revolving Fund reached 100 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines delivered to 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean in coordination with COVAX. She thanked donors for contributing with 30% of the 100-million dose. Dr. Etienne also highlighted that countries must be vigilant about implementing public health measures quickly. "They must adjust hospital systems to accommodate new surges, while ensuring health care workers have the necessary tools to safely treat COVID-19 patients," she said. Turning to the COVID-19 situation in the region, the Director highlighted that countries in Central America and in the Caribbean reported a surge in COVID-19 deaths, as well as an increase in hospitalizations. In South America, deaths in Brazil peaked, setting a record for this wave.

During the press briefing of **23 February 2022**, Dr. Carissa F. Etienne warned that low vaccination coverage in some countries of the Caribbean must be urgently addressed to stop the spread of COVID-19 and protect the most vulnerable. She also mentioned in the press briefing, that out of the 13 countries and territories in the Americas that have not yet reached WHO's 2021 goal of 40% vaccination coverage, ten are in the Caribbean. Additionally, the Director urged countries to work with trusted voices and community leaders to create spaces for dialogue to address concerns around vaccination. Dr. Etienne also made a special appeal - "As a doctor from the Caribbean who has dedicated her life to public health, the best decision you can make for your health right now is to get a vaccine against COVID," she said, alerting that "a new variant can emerge at any point." Turning to the COVID-19 situation in the region, new cases had declined by 28% from the previous week. Deaths also fell for the first time since the beginning of the Omicron wave. Although still unprecedentedly high, overall cases dropped by a third across North

America, and with the exception of Honduras, deaths also dropped in Central America. In South America, deaths decreased by 13%, with spikes remaining in some areas. In the Caribbean, new infections fell by 44%, yet eight countries and territories reported an increase in deaths.

### Regional

As the communication needs of the Region evolve, PAHO continues to disseminate key messages across multiple platforms and respond to numerous media inquiries. Communications support is provided to country offices on a variety of issues, particularly regarding COVID-19 vaccines and COVAX. **Infographics** cover a range of issues related to COVID-19, from steps on how to prevent infection to tips on staying healthy and protecting one's mental health during the pandemic.

In **Belize**, on 22 February 2022, PAHO participated in meetings with the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) Communications Team and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) to discuss approaches to assess the country's vaccination campaign and to develop a survey related to COVID-19 vaccines to measure vaccine hesitancy in the country.



### PILLAR 3. Surveillance, Epidemiological Investigation, Contact Tracing, and Adjustment of Public Health & Social Measures

Strengthen the capacity of surveillance systems to detect COVID-19 cases, while ensuring continued surveillance of other diseases epidemic and pandemic potential

### Regional

PAHO developed a **Geo-Hub** for the Region which includes a series of dashboards and epidemiological data updated daily. It has four sub-regional and 56 country/territory geo-hubs for the Americas. In addition, PAHO's **interactive dashboard** provides information for the public on cumulative cases, deaths, cumulative incidence rate, new cases and deaths, as well as several other epidemiological indicators reported by countries and territories.

PAHO also publishes weekly reports detailing trends in influenza and other respiratory viruses, as well as SARS-CoV-2 surveillance indicators. PAHO continues to analyze trends in the Region, particularly through the collection of COVID-19 nominal data.

**Seroprevalence studies** have provided the Region with invaluable data on how the virus has spread since the onset of the pandemic. PAHO maintains a **dashboard that shows seroprevalence studies in Latin America and the Caribbean**, including information on the study design, sampling method, sample sizes, and other factors.



**PAHO's Contact Tracing Knowledge Hub** publishes multidisciplinary information on contact tracing for a variety of audiences, including policymakers, responders, researchers, educators, affected communities, and the public. Go.Data is one of the tools available through this platform. It is used to support case investigation and management, display transmission chains, and for contact tracing. In collaboration with GOARN, to date, PAHO/WHO has trained more than 35 countries and territories in the Go.Data app.





## PILLAR 4. Points of Entry, International Travel, and Mass Gatherings

Support surveillance and risk communication activities at points of entry as well as implementation of appropriate public health measures

### Regional

It is important that risk mitigation measures are always in place, including advice for travelers, particularly regarding the self-monitoring of signs and symptoms; surveillance and case management at the point of entry and across borders; capacities and procedures for international contact tracing; and environmental controls and public health and social measures at points of entry and onboard conveyances.

PAHO will continue to support countries to ensure that these capacities are in place. PAHO will also support countries' efforts to define a risk-based policy while resuming international traffic in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, considering the provisions of the International Health Regulations (IHR), available scientific evidence, and the most cost-effective use of available resources.



## PILLAR 5: Laboratories and Diagnostics

Enhance laboratory capacity to detect COVID-19 cases as well as to manage large-scale testing for COVID-19 domestically or through arrangements with international reference laboratories

### Regional

Since the beginning of PAHO's response to the date of this report, the Organization has provided primers, probes and/or PCR kits for over 21.83 million reactions/tests. To date, PAHO has provided over 706,700 swabs and 365 sampling kits, among other critical materials.

During the reporting period, PAHO continued to provide technical cooperation, including data review, troubleshooting sessions, and follow-up calls on laboratory diagnostics with Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, and Uruguay

### 5.1 SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern

A number of SARS-CoV-2 variants have been identified through global genomic sequencing. Since the initial identification of SARS-CoV-2, until 25 February 2022, more than **8,727,321** complete genomic sequences have been shared globally through publicly accessible databases.

Given the significant resource requirements needed to sequence all samples in the Region to identify variants, PAHO continues to work closely with the laboratories of the countries of the Americas to help identify samples which should be prioritized for genomic sequencing. To date, PAHO has distributed **62 unique primers** to detect genetic variants using PCR.

To date, **27 countries** are participating in the [COVID-19 Genomic Surveillance Network](#), with reference

sequencing laboratories in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, the United States of America and Trinidad and Tobago visible on this [dashboard](#). This mechanism will be critical to tracking the spread or appearance of new Variants of Concern (VOCs). During the reporting period, a total of 302 new SARS-CoV-2 full genome were sequenced and genomic sequencing data shared through the PAHO COVID-19 Genetic Surveillance Network (COVIGEN) Regional Sequencing Reference Laboratories for COVID-19 in support to countries using external sequencing capacity.

## PILLAR 6: Infection Prevention and Control (IPC), and Protection of the Health Workforce

Support efforts to reduce human-to-human transmission within health facilities and the community, including through development and implementation of national IPC plans

### Regional

Implementation of national IPC plans are key to reducing COVID-19 transmission at both community and health facility levels. PAHO supports countries by procuring PPE through donations, the Revolving Fund, and training healthcare personnel.

### Country

On 24 February 2022, PAHO held a [webinar](#) to share the experience of the Ministry of Health of **Chile** in the Implementation of Infection Prevention and Control Measures in health environments, considering the Omicron Variant of Concern. The event was held virtually, with simultaneous translation in English and Spanish.

## PILLAR 7: Case Management, Clinical Operations, and Therapeutics

Improve local health system capacity and protect healthcare workers to safely deliver equitable healthcare services

### 7.1 Therapeutics and Clinical Management

Considering the breadth of knowledge and evidence related to COVID-19, PAHO maintains an **interactive infographic** to help external partners navigate PAHO and WHO's technical material and compilations of evidence from the Americas and around the globe.

The Organization worked with countries in the Region to promote the [WHO Global COVID-19 Clinical Data Platform](#) for the clinical characterization and management of hospitalized patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. This is part of a global strategy to gain a clearer understanding of the severity, clinical features, and prognostic factors of COVID-19. The Platform has more than 400,000 cases with contributions from the following countries: **Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and the United States of America.**

PAHO last updated evidence for the [Ongoing Living Update of Potential COVID-19 Therapeutics: Summary of rapid systematic reviews on 22 February 2022](#). The study synthesizes evidence on 178 therapeutics from 540 randomized controlled trials and observational studies.

## 7.2 Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs)

Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) are invaluable when demands on a country's health system exceed regular capacity. Updated information on deployed EMTs and alternative medical care sites (AMCS) throughout the Americas remained available at [PAHO's COVID-19 EMT Response information hub](#). As of 25 February 2022, there were at least 36 EMTs deployed throughout the Region, and 71 AMCs, such as military bases, sports stadiums, and fairgrounds managed by PAHO. These EMTs have added 2,926 inpatient hospital beds and 373 critical care beds throughout the Region.

### Regional

PAHO is offering a new [Webinar Series on Post COVID-19 Condition](#), aiming to present and discuss the latest information available on the different aspects of post COVID-19 condition. The first session and launch of the series was on 17 February 2022. The session presented the latest evidence and information on the role and perspectives of rehabilitation for post COVID-19 condition and actions needed to improve access to rehabilitation services for people experiencing post COVID-19 condition.



## PILLAR 8: Operational Support and Logistics (OSL), and Supply Chain

Establish and implement expedited procedures to facilitate the Organization's support to countries and territories response to COVID-19 healthcare services

### Regional

The regional team continued to collaborate with regional, national, and international partners (including other UN agencies) on all matters related to procurement, shipping, freight, logistics and technical specifications for PPE, oxygen concentrators, in vitro diagnostic products (IVDs), and other goods, supplies, and equipment critical to the COVID-19 response in the Americas.

Considering the multitude of suppliers and concerns about the quality of procured goods, PAHO has made quality assurance a critical component of its technical support in the procurement of goods, supplies and equipment for COVID-19 response. This involves reviewing technical specifications, ensuring correct shipping documentation for customs clearance, and supporting countries with quality assurance issues. WHO issued adapted interim guidance on the rational use of PPE for COVID-19 as well as considerations during severe shortages.

## 8.1 PAHO Revolving Fund for Essential Medicines and Strategic Public Health Supplies

Established in 2000, the PAHO Strategic Fund (SF) supports Member States by ensuring the quality, safety, and efficacy of medicines and other health products; improving demand planning and capacity-strengthening for supply chain systems; sustainably reducing prices of critical medications and supplies through transparent international sourcing; and a line of credit option to facilitate Member State procurement.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the SF was rapidly mobilized to assess inventories across the Region and evaluate which medications had adequate safety stock and which needed to be prioritized, avoiding

unnecessary expenses or late fees. The platform leveraged existing long-term agreements and relationships with suppliers to mitigate price inflation and better plan shipments/deliveries. The SF also coordinated alternative modes of transport (e.g., air freight versus ocean freight) to adapt to the most cost-effective and timely methods amidst continuously evolving COVID-19-related disruptions. This required direct negotiations with suppliers to absorb increases in freight costs on medicines. Finally, the SF worked with partners to support effective alternative treatment protocols to help adapt to limited supplies during COVID-19.

Since the start of the pandemic to 25 February 2022, the SF has procured more than **\$295 million** worth of COVID-19 diagnostic tests (PCR and rapid tests), PPE and medicines for critical care, supporting more than **39 million people** throughout the Region of the Americas.<sup>1</sup> The Fund continues to support the procurement of medicines and public health supplies for individuals affected by HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, diabetes, neglected tropical diseases, cardiovascular diseases, and hepatitis C. Learn more about the PAHO Strategic Fund's essential work on the PAHO website.

### PILLAR 9: Strengthening Essential Health Services and Systems

Support continued operation of equitable health systems based on Primary Health Care, to protect and sustain public health gains, investing in improved response capacity in the first level of care and the health service delivery networks, including the implementation of gender and culturally sensitive actions using human rights-based approaches, to overcome barriers to access, especially in populations in conditions of vulnerability.

#### Regional

PAHO provides continuous assistance to its Member States on **regulatory preparedness** to expedite processes for vaccine deployment. As part of the COVAX Facility's allocation mechanism, support includes presenting information on technical documents required by Member States during bilateral and regional meetings.

**Health technology assessments** (HTAs) are invaluable guidance for health authorities in the use of technologies relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic. As of 25 February 2022, there were **402 COVID-19 related reports available** in the [Regional Database of HTA Reports of the Americas \(BRISA\)](#).

The Organization collaborates with national regulatory authorities from across the Americas to share recommendations, considerations, and evaluations on products used to support COVID-19 patients and prevent transmission during the pandemic. Additionally, PAHO maintains a repository of websites and relevant information, including regulatory response on COVID-19, at the [Regional Platform on Access and Innovation for Health Technologies \(PRAIS\)](#).

#### Country

In **Belize**, PAHO supported the national consultation on the National Nutrition Policy organized by the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) on 16 February 2022. Topics discussed include the impact of COVID-19 on nutrition and food safety. PAHO provided technical support in drafting the National Nutrition Policy, convening the various national multisectoral stakeholders and reviewing the draft proposal.

<sup>1</sup> Sum of all Strategic Fund purchase orders placed to date. Occasionally, countries will withdraw or cancel orders, causing the figure to fluctuate from one report to the next.





## PILLAR 10: Vaccination

Support the introduction, deployment, and evaluation of COVID-19 vaccines, ensuring their timely and equitable access, and strengthening vaccine safety surveillance.

### Regional

As of 25 February 2022, more than **1,678,353,441 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines** have been administered in the Americas, with more than **668 million people having completed their full vaccination schedule. 51 countries and territories in the Region have begun vaccination**, 33 of these having received vaccine doses through COVAX. Overall, PAHO has **distributed more than 101,453,710 million doses** to the Americas through COVAX. Additionally, PAHO continued to provide strategic direction to countries in the Region that are pending arrival of vaccines. More details are available on [PAHO's COVID-19 Vaccination in the Americas database](#), which reports on doses administered by country.

Successfully deploying vaccines for COVID-19 requires that countries have detailed plans which factor in considerations ranging from regulatory and logistical issues to staff needs, to ensuring equitable distribution, while targeting those most at risk of infection (e.g., frontline health workers, older persons, and those with underlying conditions).

PAHO is supporting countries throughout this process. **33 countries** have completed their **national deployment and vaccination plans (NDVPs)**. **35 countries** have completed the Vaccine Introduction Readiness tool (VIRAT), which includes a dashboard that provides an overview of regional readiness. Regional support also includes work with countries interested in gaining access to vaccines through the COVAX Facility.

PAHO provides technical cooperation to countries seeking to access the COVID-19 vaccine through the COVAX Facility, including those selected for Advance Market Commitment (AMC) funding to cover their doses. This includes sharing recommendations with national authorities on steps to ensure that their NDVPs meet the necessary criteria to roll out vaccines to priority populations.

In addition to written guidance, PAHO also provides training webinars to its Member States. PAHO worked with Member States to develop workshops aimed at strengthening the Events Supposedly Attributable to Vaccination or Immunization (ESAVI) surveillance in the Region of the Americas. Access the full list of past and future training sessions for all member states on PAHO's website.

PAHO maintains a [public dashboard](#) that tracks the safety of various COVID-19 vaccines during and after clinical trials.

## Country

In **The Bahamas**, on 16 February 2022, PAHO facilitated the donation of 32,400 doses of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines to the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW). Additionally, on 12 February 2022, together with the Minister of Health and Wellness, **PAHO co-hosted vaccine pop-up vaccination sites** throughout the island of New Providence. Prior to the weekend vaccine services, healthcare workers walked around the community to inform residents of the pop-ups and encouraged them to further protect themselves and their loved ones through vaccines and boosters. The pop-ups were held on community parks. Speaker's corners were also available where residents received answers for questions regarding COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines.



Figure 1: PAHO visits Vaccination Pop-up Site at Mother Butler Park, received by Minister of Health and Wellness. Source: PAHO.

In **Belize**, on the week of 18 February 2022, PAHO met with the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) national counterpart to discuss the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) Work Plan for 2022, including PAHO's support for maintaining immunization as an essential health service, as well as the deployment of COVID-19 vaccination using remaining funds provided through PAHO.

In **Bolivia**, on 16 February 2022, a **new donation of more than 1 million Pfizer vaccines** was delivered by PAHO through the COVAX Mechanism. The doses delivered are intended to support and increase vaccination among the population under 18 years of age. As of the date of delivery, donations and doses shared via COVAX to Bolivia amounted to 8,045,540 doses since the beginning of 2021.



Figure 2: Pfizer vaccines are received in Bolivia. Source: PAHO.

## Gaps and Challenges

GAPS	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Surveillance systems:</b> additional capacity-building and equipment for analysis.</li> <li>• <b>Information systems:</b> Data management systems are essential for case monitoring and contact tracing while protecting confidentiality.</li> <li>• <b>Strategic planning and response:</b> Countries need enough resources to implement national COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan and Risk Communication Plans.</li> <li>• <b>Laboratory test kits and equipment:</b> National laboratories need more extraction kits and other supplies to keep testing.</li> <li>• <b>IPC supplies:</b> PPEs and supplies (including for WASH) are urgently needed for isolation and quarantine wards. Healthcare workers are hesitant to work without PPE.</li> <li>• <b>Health facility evaluations:</b> Countries must undertake additional assessments to guide measures for infection prevention and control.</li> <li>• <b>Resources for and access to populations in situations of vulnerability:</b> PPE and other supplies are needed in these communities. Logistical challenges must be overcome to deliver these critical goods.</li> <li>• <b>Risk communications:</b> Key messages must be tailored to each country's context to resonate with intended audiences.</li> <li>• <b>Subnational-level health workers:</b> A surge in medical personnel is needed to ensure countries can serve their whole populations and obtain more epidemiological data as it becomes available.</li> <li>• <b>Intensive care units:</b> More ICUs will be needed to manage severe cases.</li> <li>• <b>Migrant access to health services:</b> Countries are assessing how to serve these populations and better manage outbreaks.</li> <li>• <b>Private sector coordination:</b> This is essential to ensure national protocols are followed.</li> <li>• <b>Nutritional Guidance:</b> This is vital to ensure families maintain nutritional health during and after the COVID-19 emergency.</li> <li>• <b>Health Disaster Management Programs:</b> Health Disaster Management Programs and surveillance were noted as priorities to enhance the COVID-19 and any other health emergency responses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Equitable Vaccine Distribution:</b> The shortage of available vaccines limits the ability of the countries to protect their populations.</li> <li>• <b>Competitive marketplace:</b> Countries and organizations are competing for limited supplies due to global shortages of PPE and other items.</li> <li>• <b>Border closures:</b> This has seriously hampered the deployment of experts, shipment of samples for testing, and procurement of supplies and equipment for testing, case management, and infection prevention and control. It has also added additional pressure to countries undergoing complex political and socio-economic transitions.</li> <li>• <b>Managing infections in healthcare settings:</b> Healthcare workers rely on PPE and other supplies to avoid infection. Global shortages are contributing to increasing cases and frontline workers losing their lives.</li> <li>• <b>Infected healthcare workers:</b> Infected health workers who are sick or quarantined will strain health systems.</li> <li>• <b>Test availability:</b> Epidemiological monitoring requires more testing. Counterfeit tests are creating risks in resources lost and incorrect analyses.</li> <li>• <b>Health workforce limitations:</b> Insufficient human resources hamper countries' efforts to conduct contact tracing and manage patients in quarantine.</li> <li>• <b>Risk Communication:</b> The perception of risk is still low in some countries/territories and many people ignore government public health measures.</li> <li>• <b>Telephone referral systems:</b> Some countries are reporting overwhelming call volumes.</li> <li>• <b>Logistics systems:</b> Many countries are still unprepared to manage the distribution of supplies and equipment.</li> <li>• <b>Continuity in other health services:</b> The pandemic has diverted resources from other critical services for programs such as HIV, TB, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs).</li> <li>• <b>Stigma:</b> Countries must take steps to reduce stigma towards persons returning from abroad and others associated with a higher likelihood of infection.</li> <li>• <b>Public Compliance of Public Health Protocols:</b> Public reluctance to follow public health protocols has led to increased infection rates in many countries in the Americas.</li> <li>• <b>Variants:</b> New COVID-19 strains present a challenge to the control of the disease.</li> </ul>

## PAHO/WHO's COVID-19 response was made possible in part due to generous contributions and in-kind donations from the following sponsors:

- Alma Jean Henry Charitable Trust
- Government of Belize
- Government of Canada
- Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
- U.S. Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC)
- Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI)
- Government of Colombia
- Confederation of Caribbean Credit Unions (CCCU)
- Corporación Andina de Fomento (CAF)
- European Commission
- Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND)
- Fundación MAPFRE
- Fundación Yamuni Tabush
- GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance
- Global Fund
- Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Government of Japan
- Government of Korea
- Mixed Fund for Technical and Scientific Cooperation Mexico-Spain
- Government of New Zealand
- PAHO COVID-19 Response Fund
- Other donors
- Rockefeller Foundation
- Sony Latin Music
- Government of Spain
- Government of Sweden
- Government of Switzerland
- UN Agencies consortium
- UNICEF
- Government of the United Kingdom
- UN Development Coordination Office (UNCDO)
- UN Development Programme (UNDP)
- UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund
- UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)
- UN Resident Coordinator Office (UNRCO)
- USAID
- WHO Foundation
- World Bank
- World Food Programme
- Donations channeled through WHO
- Member States National Voluntary Contributions

PAHO also thanks the following donors who have contributed to the response efforts in the Americas through WHO: Azerbaijan, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Canada, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund, Germany, France, the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), Spain, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom and the World Bank.

In addition, the following donors have pledged further support to PAHO: the Caribbean Development Bank, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Wellcome Trust.

PAHO would like to also acknowledge and thank Direct Relief, Facebook, Mary Kay Cosmetics and Twitter for their generous in-kind contribution as well as Allison Becker, Salomon Beda, Sony Latin Music and Global Citizens for their strategic partnership to help fight the pandemic.

## Support PAHO's efforts to fight COVID-19 in the Americas

The Region of the Americas has the highest cumulative number of COVID-19 cases and deaths.

PAHO is working with health professionals on the frontlines of this fight.

Vaccines will help save lives and eventually halt the pandemic.

Support PAHO's Response at:  
[www.paho.org/donate](http://www.paho.org/donate)

