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Comparing “Fixed-Site” and “Mobile-Site” COVID-19 vaccine delivery strategies in reaching vulnerable peoples in Vanuatu

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Abstract

Background: On June 2nd 2021 Vanuatu launched its COVID-19 vaccination campaign. As part of this effort, two vaccine delivery strategies were implemented. A “Fixed-Site” strategy was first implemented in provincial centers such as Port Vila and Luganville, whereby vaccinations took place at a central immunization site. A “Mobile-Site” strategy was also adopted later in the campaign particularly in rural and remote areas. Here we compare the effectiveness of these two strategies in reaching “vulnerable” peoples (i.e., elderly people 55 years and above, people living with disability and people with known underlying condition).

Methods: An integral part of the COVID19 Vaccination campaign has been the electronic immunization registry (EIR) which registered and tracked all vaccine recipients. Notably, the EIR collected and stored key demographic information relating to vulnerability status of vaccine recipients including age, disability status and underlying condition status as well as the type of vaccine delivery strategy used. In order to conduct our study, data from the EIR was extracted, de-identified, aggregated and analyzed.

Results: A total of 99,570 client registrations were analyzed. Key findings include elderly people (55 years and above) were 24% more likely to be reached through mobile sites. This was even more pronounced for older groups with people 75 years and above being 43% more likely to be reached through mobile sites. Also of note, people with underlying condition were 14% more likely and people with disability were 10% more likely to be reached through mobile sites respectively.

Conclusion: The higher proportional rate of vulnerable populations vaccinated through mobile sites highlights the importance of implementing diverse vaccine delivery strategies in order to provide health services in an inclusive manner.