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Field implementation of vaccination programs in developing countries: The past, present and the way forward

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Though our struggle with germs is endless and can neither be halted nor assuaged by vaccines alone no matter how great their immunological power, we can never undermine the impact of vaccines in today's world. The long and costly process of vaccine discovery has as purpose to reduce the impact of the disease in the target population. This can only be met when this vaccine is administered to the target population. In the mean time, vaccine uptake is still grossly inefficient in developing countries evident by the higher prevalence of vaccine preventable diseases (VPD) despite availability of effective vaccines. Diseases know no bounds and mindful that the success immunization program depends on high vaccine effectiveness and adequate uptake of vaccine, much needs to be done at the vaccine implementation level to assure the future with vaccines in developing countries that currently harbours the world's largest burden of infectious diseases. Literature search reveals various vaccines implementation strategies with differing degree of successes from the beginning of vaccination in developing countries the till present. The major shortcomings of these strategies range from their lack of adaption to culture, time and advances in technology to weak health care delivery systems spiced by inadequate political will. This inevitably leads to overall deceleration in the vaccine impact despite the vaccine effectiveness. Even the successes registered so far are directly linked to the presence of organizations like UNICEF, WHO, PAHO to an unfortunate much lesser extent the involvement of the home government and the community. This leaves the question of sustainability.

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