To prevent measles, WHO recommends routine immunization programmes reach and sustain over 95% coverage with two MCV doses. WHO further recommends that all countries introduce a rubella-containing vaccine (RCV) into their national immunization programmes once they meet certain criteria. As of the end of 2019, 173 countries have introduced RCV - a 74% increase since 2000.

As countries introduce Measles-Rubella (MR) vaccine, demand for measles vaccines is gradually being replaced. Over the past ten years, MR vaccine has represented a growing share of the MCV volume procured through UNICEF, reaching over 60%. UNICEF anticipates this trend to continue during 2025 – 2026. Demand for MMR through UNICEF is relatively stable, with no major changes anticipated.

SUPPLY & DEMAND

- Recently, UNICEF partly concluded its 2024-2027 MCV tender by awarding long-term arrangements (LTAs) for supply during 2024 and 2025 to two manufacturers of measles vaccine, two manufacturers of MR vaccine, and two manufacturers of MMR vaccine, reaching a total quantity of 523 million doses.

- The offered quantities of Measles and MR vaccine are sufficient to cover the needed volumes for all programme categories; Routine, Supplementary Activities and Outbreak Response.

- MMR vaccine with Jeryl-Lynn Mumps strain is in very constrained supply. UNICEF did not receive offers for supply during the first 9 months of 2024. The offered supply is priced 90% over 2023 prices and is not offered with VVM. Countries that require this vaccine through UNICEF will be required to confirm demand 4 months in advance to planned delivery.

- During 2025 and 2026, UNICEF is projecting that Ethiopia and Nigeria will introduce the MR vaccine nationwide. This will require the exceptionally large quantities forecasted for these years. When these two countries have introduced the MR vaccine, only one large population country, DR Congo, will remain using the measles vaccine. The forecasted demand for measles vaccine is therefore decreasing and only reaching approximately 75 million doses during years where DR Congo is planning to conduct a preventive campaign.

ISSUES & CHALLENGES

INCREASE IN MEASLES OUTBREAKS
While it is not possible to accurately predict the timing and scope of outbreaks, it is foreseen that significant quantities of measles and MR vaccines will need to be available for outbreak response activities due to the decrease in routine immunization coverage in some countries.

PRICE INCREASE
While the entry of a second MR vaccine manufacturer in 2019 marked an important milestone in improving market health, the since offered pricing has not reflected the anticipated positive impact. The significant price increase during 2021 - 2023 is projected to continue into 2024 and 2025 and will negatively impact countries’ ability to finance their requirements, which in turn will negatively affect coverage rates and forecast accuracy.

LOOKING AHEAD

- UNICEF plans to conclude the MCV awards for 2026 and 2027, after receiving additional regulatory information regarding the vaccines in pipeline.

- UNICEF and partners continue to encourage new market entrants for MR vaccine.

- UNICEF will continue its close collaboration with countries and partners to continually improve and re-adjust country forecasts to facilitate production planning.

- UNICEF plans to conclude MCV awards for 2026 and 2027 towards the end of 2023.

FURTHER QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION? PLEASE CONTACT:

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