Closing the Gap in COVID-19 Vaccination Uptake in the Dominican Republic

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Context

The GoDR developed a successful vaccination strategy in 2021 by reaching more than 70% of the population with at least one dose. This successful campaign was made possible through strong partnerships and the integration of data systems. However, as restrictions were lifted, demand for vaccines slowed considerably with the rate of vaccination plateauing. The GoDR needed to implement new strategies to close the gap to reach a 100% vaccination rate.

Activity Description

The Local Health System Sustainability Activity (LHSS) provided technical assistance to the GoDR in repurposing existing data to inform COVID-19 vaccination campaigns and thereby technical strategies to ultimately increase rates of COVID-19 vaccination among at-risk groups.

Activity Impact

The activity had several key outcomes:

- **Vaccine Uptake**: The GoDR was provided with additional tools to identify and reach segments of the population it had missed during the initial stages of its vaccination campaign, potentially lowering morbidity and mortality rates especially for the high-risk population, such as those with co-morbidities.

- **Service Provision**: Combining multiple databases into a single database created population risk profiles such as age and co-morbidity, which facilitated integrated service provision in addition to targeting high-risk populations for vaccination.

- **Evidence**: The database is live and is owned by the GoDR. The effect of this database on improving vaccination coverage needs to be investigated. The map below presents a snapshot of the database capabilities to visualize priority target areas by municipality.

Facilitators

- **Data Alignment**: Existing data and systems used by the activity already existed in the Dominican Republic, enabling the rapid development of the tools and for them to be put to immediate use in identifying those not yet reached by the vaccination campaign.

- **Data Linkage**: The database integrates information from multiple sources, allowing the GoDR to target outreach and communication efforts specifically in those areas.

- **Decision Support**: The methodological strategy of using a business intelligence tool allows for the use of these data in a flexible way, without the need to generate highly complex integrated systems, both from a technological and institutional point of view.

Challenges

- **Data Alignment**: There are numerous existing databases in place that can be combined to generate useful information for decision-making and the implementation of public policies.

- **Integration**: The technical coordination of using multiple information linkages for the use of these data is flexible and easy, without the need to generate highly complex integrated systems, both from a technological and institutional point of view.

Lessons Learned

1. There are numerous existing databases in place that can be combined to generate useful information for decision-making and the implementation of public policies.

2. The technical coordination of using multiple information linkages for the use of these data is flexible and easy, without the need to generate highly complex integrated systems, both from a technological and institutional point of view.

3. Implementation of this type of methodology is highly flexible, both in terms of development and use and in the generation of institutional capacity for its expansion.

4. It is reasonable to report that the application of this type of methodology could generate a strong impact in strengthening the health systems in other countries as well, especially due to the scalability of automatically produced health information systems and databases.