

# Exchange of Immunization practices and experiences

## EXCHANGE OF IMMUNIZATION PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES

### FRENCH GUYANA – SURINAME

Vaccination Week in the Americas -

Semaine Européenne de Vaccination 2010

#### Introduction

As a follow-up on previous meetings between French Guyane and Suriname, the Meeting on Collaboration in Immunization between Suriname, French Guyane and Brazil” was held from 25 – 27 November in Suriname, to identify common practices in health, especially within the Expanded Programme on Immunization, to enhance each other’s program activities. The improved collaboration between the countries would benefit a joint operation of activities, specifically in the border areas with the countries, and ultimately contribute to improved vaccination coverage in the villages along the border river between the countries.

The Meeting discussed and agreed to work together in joint activities during the Vaccination Week 2010 and the simultaneously observed Semaine Européenne de Vaccination, from 24 – 30 April 2010. The Comité Pilotage - Programme Elargi de Vaccination (COPIL-PEV) met on 1 February in Cayenne to decide on specific activities to be implemented during the vaccination week, with the Surinamese and Brazilian counterparts. As a result of this meeting, the French counterpart prepared the proposal “Training of Health Staff on Immunization in French Guyane and Suriname”, which proposal was discussed in the next meeting between French and Surinamese counterparts, on 23 February 2010, in Cayenne.

#### Activities

-

#### Joint launching of the Vaccination Week in the Americas - Semaine Européenne de Vaccination

The joint launching will be the official proclamation of the Vaccination Week in a border village, simultaneously observed in Suriname (Albina) and French Guyana (Saint Laurent du Maroni). Since there is no common border settlement between Brazil, French Guyana and Suriname, the presence and participation of the Brazilian delegation in the joint launching will mark the start of an official collaboration with these bordering countries.

The launching is proposed to be held in Saint Laurent du Maroni, on Tuesday 27 April 2010. Representatives from international and national health organizations, together with officials from the respective Ministry of Health, and the (local) administrative authorities will meet to underscore the need for close collaboration in health, for the betterment of the health of the population in the respective border areas.

Since joint vaccination practices in each other’s system is not feasible (because of existing laws and regulations) Suriname and French Guyane will implement separate vaccination activities for identified target groups in their respective villages. These activities will be supported by simultaneous and identical, joint social mobilization, health education and promotion activities in the respective languages spoken in the border area.

-

Exchange of practices and experiences in EPI Health workers (involving a balanced group of physicians, nurses and other health care workers, from both sides) will join together, during the vaccination week, to learn about each other's programs and activities. Three venues for joint activities are identified, following the Maroni border river from north to south:

- Saint Laurent du Maroni (Fr. Guy), jointly with Albina (Sur) and Apatou (Fr.Guy)
- Stoelmanseiland (Sur) and
- Maripasula (Fr.Guy).

The joint activity in Saint Laurent du Maroni will mark the official launching of the vaccination week.

This exchange will further contribute to:

-

Improvement of the knowledge and understanding of the staff at both sides of the border with regard to the health structures and programs in the same area.

-

Familiarization with the immunization schedules and vaccines used in the respective neighboring countries.

-

Reinforcement of good practices in immunization, based on cooperation, equivalence and a common immunization book.

-

Improved vaccination coverage of the target populations in the same areas.