

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: GLOBAL VAX: ACCELERATING COVID-19 VACCINATION EFFORTS AROUND THE WORLD

In December 2021, high- and middle-income countries had a complete primary vaccination rate of 66 percent of their populations against COVID-19, while low-income countries had reached only 3 percent of their populations. Although hundreds of millions of COVID-19 vaccine doses had become available through global partnerships and donors, many countries were struggling to manage the influx of supply and administer doses in a timely manner. Recognizing the need for decisive leadership, global coordination, and technical support to administer surging donations of COVID-19 vaccines to people in need, the U.S. government stepped forward to launch the Initiative for Global Vaccine Access, known as Global VAX.

Global VAX epitomizes U.S. government leadership in global health and development at its best. Marshaling more than \$1.8 billion in funding commitments, Global VAX leveraged the full breadth of U.S. government global health programming, experience, and platforms through the United States Agency for International Development, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of State, including the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator; the Department of Defense, the Department of Health and Human Services, Peace Corps, the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, the Department of Treasury, and other interagency partners under a landmark whole-of-government effort.

Driven by the urgency to increase equitable COVID-19 vaccine uptake, Global VAX supported more than 120 partner countries to align efforts and accelerate COVID-19 vaccination. A set of 11 “surge” countries with significant need, all in sub-Saharan Africa, received intensive financial, technical, and diplomatic engagement through Global VAX that catalyzed and accelerated country COVID-19 vaccination efforts. These partnerships prioritized country-identified goals for vaccinating priority populations and context-specific responses to the pandemic.

Support from the United States and its partners through Global VAX helped to unlock extraordinary progress. As of June 1, 2023,

COVID-19 vaccine complete primary series coverage had increased by nearly 25 percentage points in low-income countries since the launch of Global VAX. In Africa, COVID-19 vaccination rates have increased more than sixfold during this time (December 1, 2021–June 1, 2023), from 4.5 percent of the population having received a COVID-19 vaccine complete primary series to 30 percent. In the 11 surge countries, COVID-19 vaccination rates grew even faster—from 5 percent to 33 percent—in the same period. This acceleration of COVID-19 vaccination over the course of less than two years would not have been possible without the support of Global VAX.

Global VAX demonstrated that a concerted push of technical support, diplomatic engagement, and funding can support countries to rapidly increase access to and confidence in vaccines in the midst of an evolving health emergency. Global VAX investments across the vaccine delivery pathway yielded achievements in policy, planning, and coordination; supply chains and logistics; human resources for health; community engagement, advocacy, and demand generation; vaccine service delivery; monitoring, evaluation, and health information systems; and pharmacovigilance.

These successes leveraged the partnerships and programs built up through decades of U.S. government investment in global health, development, and security. As the emergency phase of the COVID-19 pandemic recedes, U.S. government agencies sustain partnerships around the world to save lives, strengthen health security and pandemic preparedness, promote social and economic progress, and support countries to achieve their goals for health and development.

Looking ahead, countries must be prepared to handle COVID-19 as a manageable respiratory illness. Integrating COVID-19 vaccination into primary health care and essential health services strengthens the resiliency of country health systems and health worker capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to future waves of COVID-19 and other infectious disease outbreaks. The U.S. government is committed to continuing to work with its multilateral and bilateral partners to ensure that the investments and lessons learned from the historic Global VAX initiative inform stronger and more resilient health systems that can meet the routine health needs of people at every stage of life and can adapt quickly to the demands of future health emergencies.

GLOBAL VAX BY THE NUMBERS



\$1.8 BILLION
in U.S. funding



688 MILLION
donated
COVID-19
vaccine doses



120
Partner countries



11
Surge countries



8
U.S. government
agencies



ONE
Purpose