



PHOTO EMILE MANIGAT, USAID

COVID-19

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USAID is committed to supporting Haiti's national effort to combat COVID-19, with a focus on vaccination and strengthening the medical oxygen supply ecosystem.

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Haiti has one of the lowest COVID-19 vaccination rates in the world. As of July 2023, only about 4.4 percent of the population had received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.¹ Low demand and widespread misinformation including rumors and conspiracy theories about COVID-19, particularly on social media and in religious and entertainment communities, impede Haiti's vaccination program. As COVID-19 safety and social distancing restrictions were lifted in other countries, Haitians interpreted that news as a sign that COVID-19 is no longer a health concern. As gang violence, kidnappings, and fuel shortages compound Haiti's political and economic crises, daily threats and vulnerabilities make a COVID-19 vaccine a low priority. The Ministry of Public Health and Population (MSPP) modified the National Vaccine Deployment Plan to increase national COVID-19 vaccine coverage to 20 percent using a three-pronged strategy: 1) a COVID-19 vaccination campaign in all ten departments; 2) integration of the COVID-19 vaccine in routine immunization; and 3) strengthening health facilities providing COVID-19 vaccination services.

¹ [In November 2023, WHO's Strategic Advisory Group on Immunization \(SAGE\) updated the recommendations on COVID-19 vaccination.](#)

USAID GOALS

With the goal of increasing the number of Haitian people vaccinated against COVID-19, USAID used key partnerships and innovations to increase access, demand, and availability of COVID-19 vaccines. Furthermore, USAID strategically leverages COVID-19 vaccination efforts to strengthen the health system, improve routine immunization programs, and reinforce COVID-19 case management within its networks and public referral hospitals maintained by USAID partners.

ACCELERATING COVID-19 VACCINATION: Given the imperative to accelerate COVID-19 vaccine access, USAID continues to support direct service delivery for immunization to the general population. USAID prioritized local partners in its strategy to more effectively reach marginalized and underserved populations. Using a well-established partner base, USAID is reaching immunocompromised persons; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender groups; prisoners; mobile populations; migrants; and rural/remote communities with vaccination services. USAID is also using mobile clinics to ensure people in rural areas have access to COVID-19 vaccines.

STRENGTHENING THE MEDICAL OXYGEN ECOSYSTEM: Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, USAID has worked to improve healthcare institutions' access to medical oxygen for clinical case management of COVID-19 patients. In 2022, USAID donated 50 oxygen concentrators and 250 oxygen cylinders, and distributed them to 20 COVID-19 treatment facilities throughout Haiti. USAID also works with private sector oxygen suppliers to refill oxygen cylinders and better meet the demand for oxygen at COVID-19 treatment facilities. In 2023, efforts to reinforce and maintain the medical oxygen ecosystem across the country continued.

KEY RESULTS

To date, USAID's implementing partners have vaccinated 360,000 people in Haiti. At least 180 out of USAID's 281 service delivery sites are actively involved in COVID-19 vaccine administration across ten departments.

MAINTAINING A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP WITH THE HAITIAN GOVERNMENT: In August, 2022, the Haitian government, working with USAID partners, held a mass vaccination campaign in the North and Northeast departments where more than 58,300 individuals were vaccinated. The MSPP recognized USAID's partners for their important contributions to the campaign, supporting communication, social mobilization, and vaccination of nearly 40,800 individuals, almost 70 percent of the total number of administered vaccines. In 2023, The MSPP initiated a second mass vaccination campaign in four additional departments (South, Nippes, Grande-Anse, and Central).

SUPPORTING HARD TO REACH POPULATIONS: USAID established seven sites for mobile populations, migrants, and underserved men between October 2021-August 2022 where over 5,000 individuals were vaccinated.

INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES INTO ROUTINE IMMUNIZATION: In 2023, USAID implementing partners, continued to work toward integrating COVID-19 vaccination into routine immunization.

INCREASING MEDICAL OXYGEN CAPACITY: USAID continues to increase the medical oxygen capacity since donating two oxygen-generating plants and two electrical power generators in 2022 to hospitals in the Northwest and North departments. The plants increased the hospitals' capacity to receive patients and serve a population of over 750,000 people through networks for oxygen cylinder refills. Throughout Haiti, including hard-to-reach areas, USAID has established 14 oxygen generators in the northern and southern regions of the country to date. Two more generators are set to be installed in Port-au-Prince during the first quarter of 2024.

USAID works to build a stable and viable Haiti, and provides life-saving humanitarian assistance to Haiti's most vulnerable and hard-to-reach people. <https://www.usaid.gov/haiti> and follow @USAID/Haiti on X and Facebook.