



TURNING VACCINES INTO VACCINATION AFRICAN UNION COVID-19 VACCINATION BINGWA INITIATIVE

As of 5th July 2022, 11,837,398 cases of the COVID-19 Omicron variant were reported in Africa with over quarter of a million deaths at 254,273 and 11,188,442 recoveries reported by the **Africa CDC**. According to its latest outbreak brief, forty (40) African Union member states are reporting case fatality rates (CFR) higher than the global CFR. This suggests the African continent is not yet out of the woods and there is a need for sustained measures including substantially increasing laboratory and testing capacity, mandatory screening at points of entry, smart surveillance, strategic communication and community engagement campaigns. The low rates of vaccination in most countries, combined with an increasing laxity in adhering to appropriate public health and social measures such as hand washing, mask wearing, and social distancing, remain a concern in the efforts to save lives and livelihoods on the continent.

Of the 843.9 million **vaccine doses** available on the continent, 601.6 million doses have been administered, representing 71% utilization rate. To increase the population of Africans who are fully vaccinated, some African countries have significantly scaled up vaccine utilisation rate.



Currently, only about nineteen (19) percent of Africa’s population are fully vaccinated. This is a clear illustration that access to COVID-19 vaccines remains critical to deter more suffering and fatalities of the African citizenry, and as a means to accelerate economic and social recovery in Africa. More importantly, the utilisation rate of the vaccines by the population is of significant urgency if the continent is to realize its seventy (70) percent vaccination target by the end of the year 2022. Seventy percent (70%) vaccination plan will mean 900 million Africans will need to be vaccinated with an expected supply and access to 1.8 billion vaccine doses (using 2-dose primary series vaccine). This calls for accelerated vaccine rollout through innovative strategies.



“We have been very loud and clear about the danger and the risk for the continent not getting appropriate access to vaccines, but we need to accelerate our efforts and at least try to vaccinate 70% of the African population by the end of 2022 so that we have a chance of controlling this pandemic.”

Ahmed E. Ogwel Ouma
Acting Director, Africa CDC

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS TO ACCELERATE COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Africa Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Outbreak aims to implement well-coordinated actions and strong partnerships to strengthen the effectiveness of the responses to the pandemic across Africa. Various initiatives have so far been put in place such as the efforts to accelerate fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines. For instance, the MasterCard Foundation has deployed US\$1.5 billion over three years (2021-2023) in partnership with Africa CDC, to save the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in Africa and hasten the economic recovery of the continent. The World Bank is providing over US\$4 billion for the procurement and deployment of COVID-19 vaccines for 51 developing countries, half of which are in Africa. Germany also supported the African Vaccine Acquisition

Task Team through a promotional loan of 250 million Euros to African Export–Import Bank (Afrexim Bank) for the production, acquisition and distribution of vaccines and medical supplies.

For these aforementioned efforts to have a positive impact on the African citizenry, save lives and livelihoods, scaling up of vaccines uptake will be critical. In line with its COVID-19 Vaccine Development and Access Strategy, the African Union Commission, through the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and the Women, Gender and Youth Directorate, in April 2022 launched a COVID-19 vaccine acceleration campaign, the **African Union COVID-19 Vaccination Bingwa Initiative**. The Initiative supported by the MasterCard Foundation; German Development Cooperation Project on Strengthening Crisis and Pandemic Response in Africa implemented by GIZ; UNICEF; Trace Foundation and other partners, aims to have 100 million African citizens vaccinated by April 2023. In a well-coordinated strategy, the Bingwas – volunteers who will serve as champions and advocates for the COVID-19 vaccines - will work closely with the African Union Member States through the Saving Lives and Livelihoods (SLL) model and the 1 Million Next Level initiative to mobilize and facilitate the uptake of vaccinations through vaccination drives among other interventions at the community level.



“The deployment and uptake of vaccination is currently the greatest challenge in combating COVID-19. While vaccines are becoming more accessible everywhere, turning vaccines into vaccination remains a hurdle. Through coordinated strategic partnerships, we want to focus on the last mile delivery of vaccines for the benefit of all African citizenry as countries strive to meet their national vaccination targets.”

Tobias Thiel

Director, GIZ Office to the African Union

THE AFRICAN UNION COVID-19 VACCINATION BINGWA INITIATIVE

The African Union COVID-19 Vaccination Bingwa Initiative is a public-private youth partnership that seeks to establish a network of youth champions across the continent to accelerate the uptake of COVID-19 vaccination in Africa. The youth-led initiative is a deliberate effort to ensure Africa’s greatest asset - the youth - are fully involved, owned, lead, and make direct attributable contribution to the target of vaccinating 70% of the African populations by year 2022. In the well-designed one-year programme, through the Bingwas initiative, at least 100 million Africans including 70 million youth are targeted to be vaccinated.

Watch the message by African Union Commission Chairperson H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat at the launch of the AU Bingwa Initiative [here](#).



“The African Union COVID-19 Vaccination Bingwa initiative is investing in youth engagement and empowerment, and shared value partnerships. It’s all about the principles of comparative advantages; co-creation, co-learning, co-evolving, collective impact and mutual accountability. The youth are taking the front seat in this campaign whose call to action is for not just the youth, but the entire African citizenry to get vaccinated. It’s time to #ShootYourShot.”

Prudence Ngwenya

Acting Director, AU Commission, Women, Gender and Youth Directorate

The initiative combines advocacy and service delivery activities, acknowledging the need to adapt to the realities and contexts of the different African countries and communities. While tapping into the concept of citizen engagement through digital and non-digital tools, the Bingwa initiative is leveraging Trace Foundation platform for mass messaging and engagement of youth through various activities. **Trace Foundation** will bring to bear its decades of global experience in deploying music and arts for social and behavioral change to drive this youth-centered mobilization. This will be executed in a digital media and entertainment centric campaign titled #ShootYourShot, intended to encourage young people to get vaccinated, interact, strengthen and expand social networks for community action and collective good of the continent. Further, this collaboration will facilitate collaborations with social icons and influencers from across the continent to amplify their voices on the campaign and continental vaccination roadshow.

In a show of commitment to the initiative, the Government of Uganda is the first country to express its support and willingness to drive up mobilisation of young people through the Bingwa Initiative.

H.E. Yoweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, on the 5th of July 2022, signed the pledge to support the Bingwa Initiative and provide resources for nationwide outreaches. It is expected that many other countries will join in the mobilisation in the days ahead.



Ramping up COVID-19 vaccination on the African continent remains the surest path to saving lives and livelihoods and unleashing the potential of African youth by protecting them from the effects of the global pandemic. As many African countries try to grapple with the realities of building back better and set their social and economic life on the path of recovery, efforts must be made to avoid the resurgence of COVID-19. Supporting national COVID-19 vaccination roll-out plans, leveraging partnerships and enhancing broad based social acceptance of the vaccines remains the best strategy to bring the COVID-19 pandemic under control.



Visit www.africacdc.org/ to learn more about how Africa CDC strengthens the capacity and capability of Africa's public health institutions as well as partnerships to detect and respond quickly and effectively to disease threats and outbreaks, based on data-driven interventions and programmes.

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