



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE AFRICAN UNION (AU) COVID-19 VACCINATION BINGWA INITIATIVE – SOUTHERN AND WESTERN AFRICA REGIONS

About the Initiative

Three years ago on 14 February 2020 the first case of COVID-19 was recorded in Africa. The African Union (AU) through the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has taken unprecedented steps to support AU Member States efforts to fight COVID-19 pandemic. In April 2022, the chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) officially launched an African Union public-private-youth initiative co-led by Africa CDC under the name “**African Union COVID-19 Vaccination Bingwa Initiative**” as part of the Africa CDC’s Programme of **Saving Lives and Livelihoods**. *Bingwa is the Swahili word for “Champion”*. The initiative seeks to establish a network of COVID-19 vaccination youth champions across the continent to accelerate the uptake of COVID-19 vaccination in Africa.

COVID-19 vaccines offer life-saving protection against severe COVID-19 that has resulted in significant morbidity and mortality. This also means the speed and scale of uptake of vaccinations needs to be ramped up to avoid vaccine wastage, bring the pandemic under control and speed economic recovery on the continent. As at 13 February 2023, about 1.080 billion vaccines have been supplied, of which about 900 million have been administered to the African population. This translates to approximately 83% of the supplied vaccines having been administered, leading to a vaccination coverage (total population) of 30.2 % on the continent compared to a target of 70% (900 million) by the end of 2022. However, the coverage for population 12 years and above is 43.73%.

With African youth, constituting over 60% of the continent’s population, their mobilization and meaningful engagement has the potential to be game changing in controlling the COVID-19 pandemic on the continent. This initiative is further motivated by H.E. President Cyril Ramaphosa’s call for innovative ways to scale up vaccinations across the continent.

Africa CDC is therefore announcing a **call for applications** for young Africans from the **Southern and Western Africa regions** who are motivated and willing to contribute to the acceleration of the COVID-19 vaccination uptake in their countries, to apply for the **African Union COVID-19 Vaccination BINGWA initiative**. The selected BINGWAs (**champions**) are expected to perform the following duties for a period of up to 12 months:

1. Develop a community engagement plan to mobilize their respective communities including friends and families to get vaccinated fully against COVID-19
2. Support capacity building efforts to onboard social actors within the community to help mobilize for the COVID-19 vaccinations
3. Organize innovative youth-focused events to mobilize young people and the broader community to take up the COVID-19 vaccines e.g. Campaigns, community mobilization, peer-to-peer advocacy, etc.
4. Serve as AU/Africa CDC focal points for youth vaccination in their respective countries.
5. Participate in the capacity building training organized by Africa CDC in preparation of their deployment to respective countries/communities.
6. Document progress recorded in mobilizing their respective communities and the improvement in vaccination rates in their community.

Eligibility criteria for AU BINGWA (*Applicants must meet the following criteria*):

1. Citizen and resident of:
 - a) The Southern Africa Region. The following countries are part of the Southern Africa RCC region: Republic of Angola, Republic of Botswana, Kingdom of Eswatini, Kingdom of Lesotho, Republic of Malawi, Republic of Mozambique, Republic of Namibia, Republic of South Africa, Republic of Zambia and Republic of Zimbabwe.
 - b) Western Africa Region. The following countries are part of the Western Africa RCC region: Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, Republic of Cabo Verde, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, Republic of Gambia, Republic of Ghana, Republic of Guinea, Republic of Guinea-Bissau, Republic of Liberia, Republic of Mali, Republic of Niger, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Republic of Senegal, Republic of Sierra Leone and Togolese Republic.

2. Aged between 18 – 35 years (*must be under the age of 35 when completing the 12 Months service*)
3. Possess a post-secondary education (Bachelors and/or *Master's will be an added value*)
4. Available in 2022/23 to dedicate 12 (twelve) months as a BINGWA
5. Committed to live and work in their country for the entire duration of deployment
6. Proficient in the local language and at least one of the AU working languages (*Arabic, English, French, Kiswahili, Portuguese and Spanish*)
7. Have at least 1-year verifiable community and/or youth engagement experience and 1-year professional work experience. (*Experience in Public Health domain will be an added advantage*)
8. Must be fully vaccinated (*Proof of vaccination is required*)
9. *Proven ability to use a computer system and familiar with MS Office applications and social media tools/platforms*
10. All applications should confirm *their availability to travel for the week of training*.

Selection criteria for BINGWA Initiative:

1. An independent committee comprising of experts from Africa CDC and African Union Commission will conduct selection to the initiative.
2. Application documents must provide clear and detailed information about the applicant including their age, gender, nationality, language, education, values and experience relating to the following criteria: – experience and professional attainment in youth engagement activities in their respective countries, experience in community mobilization, and experience in youth leadership will be a benefit.
3. Submission of a **written** motivation statement briefly detailing why you want to become a BINGWA and what you see as the challenges/gaps hampering vaccination in Africa and specifically in your country. Further, detail your ideas for increasing COVID-19 vaccine uptake in your community.
4. A video interview may be scheduled for shortlisted applicants.

What is included in the BINGWA Initiative?

The BINGWA Initiative is a one-year initiative that will equip vaccinated youth champion across the African continent with technical skills to reach, mobilize and engage their communities and peers to be fully vaccinated against COVID 19. Selected BINGWAS will be supported by experienced experts in key public health, SBCC and community engagement fields from African union / Africa CDC and Partner organizations to enhance their skills in the following areas among others:

1. Understanding Africa CDC and the New Public Health Order for Africa
2. Understanding COVID 19 and COVID 19 Vaccination
3. Risk Communication, Community Engagement and influencing for COVID 19 vaccination
4. Social media Engagement and Mobilization for impact
5. Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) and,
6. Planning, monitoring, evaluation and Reporting

How to apply?

Applicants are expected **to fill out the application form online** with their personal information, educational and professional background attaching a:

- Statement briefly detailing why they want to become BINGWA and What are the challenges/gaps hampering vaccination in Africa and in their country specifically
- Proof of Education achievements (degrees)
- Proof of COVID 19 Vaccination status and
- A two (2) pages curriculum Vitae MAXIMUM

All applications should be completed through this [link](#).

Financing

Africa CDC under Saving Lives and Livelihood Programme will provide living allowance for a period of 12 Months to all the selected BINGWAs and meet all the costs associated with learning and development materials associated to the initiative including travel, daily allowance, and trainings organized by Africa CDC with the support of Packard Foundation and the Government of Canada

Important dates

- Deadline for applications: **10 to 25 February 2023 at 05:00 pm SAT.**
- Successful applicants will be informed two weeks after the deadline.
- The training for the selected applicants will start the week of **20 March 2023** (Southern Africa Region) and the week of **10 April 2023** (Western Africa Region).

Africa CDC welcomes applications from all qualified youth from the Southern Africa region regardless of their gender, race, disability, religious belief, caste, or marital status. Young women are encouraged to apply.

For more information, contact:

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