CGHE Assistance for Introduction of HepB Birth Dose Vaccination in Africa
Africa has the lowest coverage of HepB-BD vaccine estimated at 17% in 2021.

HepB-BD coverage by WHO region, 2000–2021

- AFR
- AMR
- EMR
- EUR
- GLOBAL
- SEAR
- WPR

Percent coverage:
- 78% (WPR)
- 42% (GLOBAL)
- 17% (AFR)

Year:
Only 15/47 African countries have introduced the HepB-BD vaccine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year HepB-BD introduced</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Algeria</td>
<td>2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Angola</td>
<td>2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Benin</td>
<td>2020</td>
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<td>4. Botswana</td>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>5. Carbo Verde</td>
<td>2002</td>
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<td>6. Cote d'Ivoire</td>
<td>2019</td>
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<td>7. Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>2019</td>
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<td>8. Ethiopia**</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Mauritania</td>
<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Mauritius*</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Namibia</td>
<td>2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Nigeria</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Senegal</td>
<td>2016</td>
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</tbody>
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*using a screening and targeted vaccination approach
**personal communication from WHO

Uganda’s NITAG (UNITAG) recently made a recommendation for HepB-BD introduction
CGHE Previous or Ongoing Activities
Community of Practice on HBV EMTCT in Africa

290 unique participants

35 Countries in Africa represented

MoU with Africa CDC to support:
- Situation analysis on national viral hepatitis programs in AU member states
- Capacity building trainings for HCWs on viral hepatitis management
- Estimate HBV and HCV prevalence in 5 pilot countries
- Establish sentinel surveillance for HBV and HCV in 5 countries
Ongoing Research: IMPACT-B study

**IMmunization to Protect African Children from Transmission of Hepatitis B**
Multi-centre: Senegal, The Gambia, Ethiopia
Duration: 30 months

- Overall study aims
  - To furnish important data gaps in Africa on effectiveness of timely HepB-BD stratified by HBeAg/HBV viral load status.
  - To allow better quantification of the impact of scaling up HepB-BD and therefore guide policies on HepB-BD introduction and scale-up in the region.
NITAG HepB-BD toolkit: A resource for developing policy recommendations for HepB-BD vaccination in Africa

Provides information in four key areas:
1. Overview of hepatitis B disease, including risk and burden in Africa
2. Details on the hepatitis B vaccine schedule, effectiveness, safety and administration
3. Elimination targets for mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B and vaccination coverage requirements
4. Considerations for introducing HepB-BD in African countries, including economic considerations

https://www.globalhep.org
Engaged 7 CSOs in 5 countries to advocate for HepB-BD introduction:

- **Ghana**
  - Hepatitis Alliance-Ghana

- **Cameroon**
  - Care for Social Welfare International

- **Uganda**
  - Hepatitis Aid Organization
  - Great Lakes Peace Center
  - Africa Hepatitis Initiative

- **Tanzania**
  - Foundation for Liver and Gastrointestinal Research

- **Malawi**
  - Health and Rights Education Programme

**Activities:**
1. Develop education materials for communities
2. Trained birth attendants
3. Hold high level meetings with health officials

Tentative CDC support for activities in 2023-2024
Only 3 participants reported COVID-19 impacted country’s decision to introduce HepB-BD vaccination.

19 (79%) reported Gavi funding was of high or moderate importance and increased priority for HepB-BD introduction (75%)

Njuguna H, Lancet Gastro Hep 2023
Potential/actual challenges for HepB-BD introduction or scale-up (n=24)

- Implementing timely HepB-BD vaccination of newborns born outside of health facilities (n=17)
- Training birth attendants and other clinicians to deliver HepB-BD vaccination (n=16)
- Increasing political and civil society awareness of hepatitis B and health benefits of hepatitis B vaccination (n=16)
- Developing or revising data systems to monitor and evaluate coverage of HepB-BD vaccination (n=15)
- Implementing timely HepB-BD vaccination in delivery rooms (n=13)
- Assuring reliable transportation and storage capacity (n=7)
- Obtaining technical assistance to complete the Gavi application for HepB-BD support (when it becomes available) (n=6)
- Assuring adequate cold chain capacity (n=6)
- Initiating the NITAG process (n=3)

Njuguna H, Lancet Gastro Hep 2023
Priorities for Gavi Support of HepB-BD implementation (n=24 participants)

- Healthcare worker training: n=23
- HepB-BD demand creation: n=19
- Developing strategies to reach babies born outside health facilities: n=19
- Formulating HepB-BD policy: n=15
- Developing data systems: n=15
- Expanding cold chain: n=14

Njuguna H, Lancet GastroHep 2023
Potential Areas of TA for Introduction of HepB BD Vaccination – Africa countries

- **Generate evidence** as appropriate
  - Disease serosurveys and disease progression and mortality
  - Economic/cost-benefit assessments
  - Feasibility and acceptability of vaccination
  - Compile data from credible international resources (e.g., global guidance, vaccine effectiveness and impact:
  - Support **NITAG** policy development
    - Toolkit, access to data for evidence generation
    - Assistance with analysis and presentation
- **Build political support and commitment**
  - Funding and mobilize community resources
  - Public understanding and support
- **Raise awareness of the benefits of hepatitis B BD among healthcare workers, public**
  - Support with Applications for Gavi support (when available) and vaccine introduction
Potential areas of TA for Scale-up of HepB BD Vaccination – Africa countries

- **Assess barriers** to high coverage with timely HepB-BD
  - Identify strategies to address cultural challenges to timely HepB-BD
  - Address barriers to health facility deliveries
- **Ensure national and local policies** enable Timely HepB-BD and revise as needed
- **Support coordination** between immunization and maternal and child health programs
  - **Integration of services** benefits Hepb BD vaccination as well as maternal and child health (ANC, PNC, Vit K, BCG, OPV0)
Potential areas of TA for Scale-up of HepB BD Vaccination – Africa countries

- Vaccination training of healthcare workers particularly skilled birth attendants
  - Emphasize the importance of timeliness in disease prevention
- Community Advocacy and awareness (generate demand for the HepB-BD)
  - Education of pregnant women and their families
  - Role of Civil Society
- Improve timely HepB-BD coverage for hospital births (public and private)
  - Train maternity staff in immunization
  - Availability of HepB-BD in the delivery ward (vaccine stock management)
  - Integrate HepB-BD with essential newborn care
  - Availability of vaccine every day including weekends (Checklist to make sure the infant does not leave the hospital without HepB-BD)
Potential areas of TA for Scale-up of HepB BD Vaccination – Africa countries

• Create plans to reach home births
  • Role of community volunteers in linking mothers to health facilities
  • Include HepB-BD with delivery kits
  • Use single dose vials
  • Outreach vaccination plans during post natal care visits
  • Evaluate use of HepB-BD outside the cold chain in the African context
  • Assess the role of Uniject in areas that lack skilled HCWs

• Support improvement in data management
  • Track hospital and home births
  • Track timeliness of HepB-BD
  • Coordination in reporting between MCH and EPI
Gavi Will Begin to Support Implementation of HepB Birth Dose Vaccination

Executive Board, June 27, 2023: approved re-starting the introduction of Hepatitis B birth dose vaccination (paused for COVID-19 response)

Gavi staff looking ahead to support for implementation

Details pending