


MOMENTUM

Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity



NIGER

Supporting COVID-19 Immunization in Niger

MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity in Niger		
	Where we work Regions: Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Niamey, Tahoua, Tillabéri, and Zinder Districts: 72	Population Country: 24,463,374 Project-supported areas: 24,463,374

BACKGROUND

MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity (the project) aims to strengthen routine immunization (RI) programs to overcome the entrenched obstacles contributing to stagnating and declining immunization rates and barriers to reaching zero-dose and under-immunized children with life-saving vaccines. Since the COVID-19 pandemic's onset, the project has supported countries with the maintenance and adaptation of RI services and provided strategic technical support for COVID-19 vaccine introduction.

From January 2020 to September 2022, Niger has had 9,408 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 313 reported deaths¹. To date, more than 4.5 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered, reaching about 28 percent of the eligible population. The project works closely with national leaders of the immunization program to support COVID-19 vaccine introduction and supply chain management in the Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Niamey, Tahoua, Tillabéri, and Zinder regions.

¹ World Health Organization COVID-19 Dashboard

AREAS OF SUPPORT

VACCINE SAFETY AND SECURITY

The project provides support at the national, and subnational levels for supply chain activities to maintain the integrity and safety of COVID-19 vaccines and routine vaccines. The country procured new technology that provides immunization programs with more real-time visibility into cold chain temperatures, allowing them to be more proactive to avoid temperature readings outside the acceptable temperature ranges in order to ensure vaccine safety and effectiveness. The project is supporting the introduction and use of three new technologies, including Parsyl remote temperature monitoring devices, ultra-cold chain remote temperature monitoring devices, and the Varo smartphone application. These technologies provide notifications of temperature excursions that could damage vaccines. The remote temperature monitoring devices also send data to a dashboard for greater oversight and visibility.

To improve cold chain maintenance in the long term, the project has established forward-looking practices in Niger, including investing in additional human resources for cold chain maintenance and establishing a proactive, data-driven maintenance system.

VACCINE MANAGEMENT AND DISTRIBUTION

MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity developed and distributed waste management standard operating procedures (SOPs) to all eight regions of Niger. In September 2022, the project conducted a workshop to disseminate the SOPs across all entities working in waste management, including the United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Niger Directions of Hygiene and Pharmacy, and all eight regions of the country. Proper waste management is necessary for environmental and public safety reasons. The project also helps the Ministry of Health inspect incoming vaccine shipments and properly dispose of expired and non-viable doses.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The project has been providing technical assistance for the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines in Maradi, Tahoua, and Zinder regions. The project applies comprehensive vaccine management best practices to ensure that vaccine inventory is complete, the vaccine registry is up to date, vaccine cold chain equipment is appropriately stocked, and vaccines are well arranged in refrigerators. The recently introduced Parsyl remote temperature monitoring devices will contribute to tracking temperature excursions and enabling a timely response to prevent vaccines' exposure to high and low temperatures.