

OUR WORK IN AFRICA

FACT SHEET



Children gathering at a launch ceremony for the introduction of the meningitis A vaccine, MenAfriVac™—priced at less than \$0.50 (U.S.) per dose, it is the first vaccine designed specifically for Africa (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 2010).

OVERVIEW

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. Africa has made unprecedented gains in health and development in the past decade, but the continent faces significant challenges to continued progress. We work closely with many partners—across both the public and private sectors—to help millions of people improve their health and overcome hunger and extreme poverty.

OUR PRIORITIES

Vaccines

Vaccines prevent disease, give children a healthy start to life, and are one of the best investments in global health. We work together with partners such as the GAVI Alliance, UNICEF, World Health Organization (WHO), and Rotary International to strengthen routine immunization and introduce new and underutilized vaccines to prevent pneumonia and severe diarrhea, the two leading causes of child death.

- In the past decade, GAVI has supported the immunization of 326 million children worldwide and prevented more than five million child deaths, primarily in Africa.
- In December 2010, the Meningitis Vaccine Project introduced a meningitis A vaccine that was specifically developed to eliminate a leading cause of death in 25 African countries. More than 60 million doses have been administered, reducing case numbers to historic lows.

Polio offers a shining example of the power of vaccines. Two decades ago, global health leaders resolved to wipe polio off the planet. Today, we are 99 percent of the way there. In Nigeria—the last African country with endemic polio—we are working closely with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, Nigerian government officials, and local partners to protect all children. We also support efforts in other African countries to contain periodic polio outbreaks caused by the accidental reintroduction of the virus from Nigeria.

Agriculture

Our agriculture efforts are focused on helping small farmers—most of whom are women—grow and sell more so they can improve their families' nutrition and build self-sufficiency for the long term. We listen closely to small farmers and focus on the staple crops and livestock that matter most to them. In sub-Saharan Africa, we are focusing on maize, cassava, rice, sorghum, groundnuts, yams, millet, cowpeas, beans, and sweet potatoes. We fund research at the global and local levels and work closely with local partners, such as Nairobi-based AGRA, to ensure that small farmers are supported by strong policies and have access to better seeds, training, and markets.

- AGRA's soil health program is training farmers to improve their soil management practices so they can increase their productivity and preserve the land's fertility for future generations.
- The World Food Programme (WFP)'s Purchase for Progress initiative is helping small farmers become suppliers for its large-scale food programs, increasing farmers' incomes and giving them access to other markets.

Malaria

We work with African heads of state through the African Leaders Malaria Alliance and with other key partners to expand access to malaria control and treatment, including long-lasting insecticidal nets, artemisinin-based combination therapies, and rapid diagnostic tests. We also invest in the discovery of new tools—such as the RTS,S malaria vaccine—that have the potential to reduce malaria deaths to near zero and ultimately eradicate the disease.

- PATH's Malaria Vaccine Initiative has produced a potential breakthrough in efforts to control and ultimately eradicate malaria with the development of the RTS,S vaccine, which prevented malaria in more than half of clinical trial participants.

HIV/AIDS

We work with organizations such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to strengthen the capacity of national health systems to diagnose, treat, and prevent HIV infection, and break the deadly synergy of HIV/ TB coinfection. We also partner with leading research



Rebecca W. Njoroee helping to weigh bananas at the Maruyu Agribusiness Services Center (Murango, Kenya, 2011).

programs in South Africa and other countries to advance the discovery of safe and effective HIV vaccines that can protect future generations against a disease that claims the lives of 1.5 million Africans each year.

- The Global Fund has played a critical role in expanding access to HIV treatment. Today, more than six million people are receiving treatment—the vast majority of whom are in Africa—and investments in HIV prevention and treatment for mothers and children are helping to strengthen the overall quality of maternal and child healthcare.

Family Health

Ensuring that all children have a healthy start in life, and that women have healthy pregnancies, is one of the best investments that we can make in the future. We help expand access to low-cost interventions, such as antibiotics for simple infections and sterile blades to cut umbilical cords, that significantly reduce maternal and child mortality. We also support voluntary family planning to help couples make thoughtful decisions about when to start families and how many children they will have.

FHI Solutions is helping mothers adopt breast-feeding and other feeding practices that ensure the development of healthy minds, bodies, and immune systems during the critical first 1,000 days of a child's life.

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Jeff Raikes and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.

For additional information on the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, please visit our website: www.gatesfoundation.org.

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