



VACCINE SOLIDARITY WITH AFRICA
OUR IMPACT

ABOUT AMREF HEALTH AFRICA

Amref Health Africa is Africa's leading health NGO. Headquartered in Nairobi, we partner with communities in 35 countries to sustainably strengthen health systems and improve access to high-quality care. Since starting out as the Flying Doctors of East Africa in 1957, we have always been driven by the belief that health is a human right, striving to remove the barriers that prevent people across the African continent from accessing life-saving care. Sixty five years on, this ethos continues to underpin everything we do.

Since the spring of 2020, Amref Health Africa has been at the forefront of the COVID-19 response in sub-Saharan Africa. The ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have created an increased need for our unique expertise: not just in responding to the impact of the pandemic, but in strengthening health systems in a sustainable way – an essential step in preparing for future public health emergencies.

Community health worker Mariam at Amref's Kibera Health Centre



VACCINE SOLIDARITY WITH AFRICA

Africa is home to 17% of the world's population, yet it remains the least vaccinated continent - with [only 26.8% of Africans fully vaccinated to date](#), falling far short of commitments to fully vaccinate 70% of the world's population by September 2022. Meanwhile, fourth and fifth booster doses become available for vulnerable populations in the world's wealthier regions, where many countries have ended their COVID-19 restrictions.

To protect African countries from future waves of COVID-19, we must vaccinate at least 90% of vulnerable populations against COVID-19 and ensure the robustness of routine immunisation programmes across the region. [There is an ongoing need to address the complexities of the vaccine rollout in Africa; to end vaccine injustice.](#)

The truth remains that no one is safe until everyone is.

Amref Health Africa remains a pillar in the continent's pandemic response. Through our strong convening power, technical capabilities, variability of country programmes and concerted interventions of our subsidiaries, we continue to support the COVID-19 response of various governments across Africa, including promoting uptake of vaccines, providing technical assistance, leading global advocacy campaigns for vaccine equity, and strengthening future pandemic resilience. These efforts saw Amref represented in various task forces and technical working groups on COVID-19 response across the continent.

In mid-2021, we launched the global campaign 'End Vaccine Injustice in Africa' along with the UK 'Vaccine Solidarity with Africa' campaign. The global campaign called on world leaders to leave no-one behind in the race to bring an end to the COVID-19 pandemic by delivering more vaccines for the continent. Our global petition collected around 200,000 signatures. Amref has trained health workers to administer vaccines and set up mobile clinics taking doses to remote areas, and worked with communities to dispel vaccine myths. Throughout, we have worked to limit the pandemic's impact on already-fragile health systems, ensuring life-saving services – like child immunisation, TB and malaria care and antenatal services – remain accessible.



Nurse Robert Nyaega prepares a Covid-19 vaccine during a mobile Covid-19 vaccination drive at Miruka Market in Nyamira County, Kenya

OUR APPROACH

With the support of individuals and organisations around the world, Amref is continuing our work to **create an enabling environment for a successful continent-wide vaccination campaign**. Our recent data shows that public confidence levels in COVID-19 vaccines was around 75% in most African countries as soon as supplies improved. But the level of uptake of the vaccines was much below the confidence levels.

We are working with Ministries of Health and partners to strengthen every facet of vaccination efforts—ensuring accurate information on the vaccines where available, on hygiene and other prevention methods, and on bringing vaccines to hard-to-reach communities. There is also a strong advocacy dimension to our vaccination work. We use our platform to influence decision-makers at national, regional, and global levels.



Ann Kaari, a nurse at Mwtapa Health Centre administering COVID-19 vaccine to a client. Ann moves around with the mobile clinic in her community.

Our vaccination work has four key areas of focus:

- 1. Supporting **planning and coordination**, at both national and sub-national level:** sharing our technical and on-the-ground expertise, as part of national COVID-19 task forces across the region, to inform country vaccination and response priorities.
- 2. **Capacity-building** for all stakeholders involved in the response:** training the health workforce in vaccination activities, including data management, and policymakers to ensure the right frameworks and strategies are in place, so vaccines can be safely stored, transported, and administered in a timely manner.
- 3. **Outreach / demand creation**: taking the vaccine to the people.** We are mobilising communities to create demand by tackling vaccine hesitancy, myths, and misinformation. We are working with partners, community health workers and communities in Kenya to bring COVID-19 vaccinations to last-mile communities.
- 4. **Support for treatment centres**:** setting-up COVID-19 Vaccination Centres (CVCs) in outreach centres in urban and rural areas to ensure equitable access and providing logistical support to distribute vaccines, as well as supplying PPE and oxygen to health facilities.

We will continue to embed the learnings from our approach into our programmes going forward.

THE DIFFERENCE WE MADE – WITH YOUR SUPPORT

● From 2020-2022 we facilitated full Covid-19 immunisations for

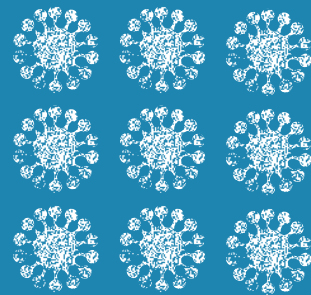
13.3 million people

and administered a total of

15.2 million doses

(this includes first and second doses as well as booster doses)

● Amref leadership served on COVID-19 emergency response taskforces in **nine countries**, and our **COVID-19 response extends to 31 countries**.



● We provided

164,827

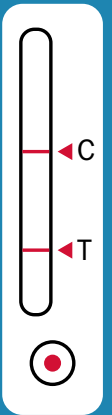
community and facility-based health workers with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).



● We facilitated **COVID-19 tests** for

110,313

people across health facilities and Amref Medical Center.



● From 2020-2022, we trained

334,987

health workers (community and health facility-based) across the continent in COVID-19 specific topics through our digital training platforms Leap and Jibu, and through in-person training.



● We launched a fleet of

10 Mobile Vaccination Clinics (MVCs) in Kenya,

which visit marketplaces, bus stops, places of worship, academic centres, government institutions or any social gathering with COVID-19 vaccinations, providing around 1,000 vaccinations per day to hard-to-reach communities.



● Our fleet of Flying Doctors has provided emergency hospital transportation for **525 critically ill COVID-19 patients**, from the continent's most hard-to-reach areas. Although COVID-19 patients made up **48.6%** of total patient transports in 2021, Flying Doctors has seen a steady decrease in COVID-19 transport requests, potentially attributable to rising immunity, increased access to vaccines and the milder Omicron variant's dominance over the past year.

● We were chosen by the **Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** – the African Union's public health agency – as the **lead partner** for setting up COVID-19 Vaccination Centres to meet national vaccination targets in **24 countries** across sub-Saharan Africa.



SPOTLIGHT ON: UGANDA

Amref is working with partners, including Population Services International and National Business Compact on Coronavirus, to implement rapid behavior change actions on prevention and control of the new COVID-19 variants in Uganda.



Health workers trained in Arua district, July 2022



Youth display some of the posters with key messages about the HBCC campaign during the launch in Uganda

The programme aims to reach at least seven million people in Kampala and Wakiso districts through social media and digital communication platforms by March 2023. To date, it has reached about 1.5m people through its vox pops, news articles, and web content with youth-targeted Pulse Africa with messages on hygiene tips, hand washing tips, social distancing, mask wearing, and COVID-19 vaccination.

Amref is also continuing the Coronavirus: Stop the Spread programme reducing the impact of COVID-19 in the community by strengthening the health system through supporting infection prevention and control measures in 20 project districts in the Acholi and West Nile regions of Uganda. The programme aimed to train health workers in community sensitization, COVID-19 infection prevention and control, case management, detection, rapid testing and timely reporting. To date, it has reached 1,000 village health teams (VHTs), 500 health workers, 550 Community Health Workers and 80 health facilities with specialized face to face training across all 20 target districts, reached 14,346 village health teams across 20 districts through the LEAP digital training platform and procured PPE for 500 health workers. Each VHT has taken this training and conducted community sensitization activities that increase behavioural change and awareness of COVID-19 infection, prevention, and control.

MEET KERANGO MICHAEL

A VHT MEMBER TRAINED THROUGH THE STOP THE SPREAD PROGRAMME



Kerango is a VHT member working in Zingili Paidha town council in the Zombo district, this is his feedback from his COVID-19 training:

“On behalf of the village health team, I would like to thank Amref Health Africa for the wonderful work they are doing in improving the lives of the people in our community through the VHT network and above all for organizing this VHT training on Home based care management of COVID-19. In the training we got to know our roles in supporting COVID-19 patients’ management from home, we learned how to identify COVID-19 cases and how to report them using different channels. We are all determined to go back and start COVID-19 risk communication and prevention in our communities.”

SPOTLIGHT ON: MALAWI



Community health workers conducting door-door COVID-19 vaccination campaign

In Malawi, we're working to increase the readiness of communities in three districts - Mangochi, Machinga and Zomba - to increase demand and access to COVID-19 vaccines.

By building the capacity through training of 1,500 community health workers/volunteers (CHW/Vs), the project aims to engage and mobilise community members for COVID-19 vaccination. So far, the project has reached 1,570 CHW/Vs with training, and with district vaccination teams has supported 98,060 people to be vaccinated.

SPOTLIGHT ON: MOBILE VACCINATION CLINICS



Community health worker Christine Bosibori Ondigo speaks through a megaphone to raise awareness during a mobile COVID-19 vaccination drive in Nyamira County

In partnership with AstraZeneca and the Kenyan Ministry of Health, we launched an exciting new initiative to complement national government strategies to increase access to COVID-19 vaccines, and health promotion and screening for people living with non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Mobile Vaccination Clinics (MVCs) are a mobile trailer offering integrated COVID-19 services, such as COVID-19 screening, vaccination, and urgent care following immunization as needed. We work with the Ministry of Health at the county level to determine the counties most in need.

"This innovation is closing the gap between the people, and health systems" says Dr Githinji, CEO of Amref Health Africa.

Each MVC can vaccinate 70-100 people every day, so these 10 MVCs have the potential to reach 1,000 people per day in hard-to-reach communities. They visit marketplaces, bus stops, places of worship, academic centres,

government institutions or any social gathering to bring access to COVID-19 vaccinations to people who might not otherwise have access. Phanice Kwamboka was a little nervous about getting the COVID-19 vaccine. She is 38 years-old and lives with her husband and four children in Barani village, Mombasa County. Her concern was losing her life after getting the job. *"People said if you get the vaccine and you have an underlying disease, you will die. I was scared because I have diabetes."* Misinformation about the vaccine is still immense in some communities. In 2014, Phanice was diagnosed with diabetes. She was devastated by the news. Over the years she found it difficult to keep her condition under control - but with information from Health Workers, she has managed. *"It can be difficult at times, I get my medicine in Kilifi which is quite far,"* she says. Phanice received her first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at the MVC and is doing well.

LOOKING AHEAD:

STRENGTHENING AFRICAN HEALTH SYSTEMS TO MEET AFRICAN HEALTH CHALLENGES

At the end of 2022, Africa had administered more than 746 million vaccine doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Despite the commendable progress achieved to date, Africa still lags far behind the rest of the world in vaccination. In African countries, only 34 in 100 people have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, as of 29 January 2023.

Covax—the Gavi, CEPI and WHO initiative on vaccine sharing—had by November 2022 shipped more than 1.8 billion coronavirus vaccines to 146 countries. But it has also fallen short of its ambitious targets, most recently to help vaccinate 70 percent of the world’s population against the virus by mid-2022. That figure, at the end of 2022, currently stands at 68.6% of the global population who have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine—but that is just 24.9% of people in low-income countries.

To advance global vaccine equity, the most important question is how we build vaccination capacity in developing countries, Dr Githinji Gitahi said to the Washington Post recently. “It’s about saying, ‘What about global systems, and how do we close the inequity permanently, without having to look for short-term vehicles in the future?’”. [Read the full article here.](#)

Heading into 2023, Amref’s firm focus remains on collaboration with communities, governments and partners to strengthen health systems. By building health worker capacity and capability, using innovative service delivery mechanisms, and integrating vaccination into regular primary healthcare services, we are working to overcome the barriers to access and to increase the uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine.

One of the innovations born from the COVID-19 pandemic to close the gap between people and healthcare was the Mobile Vaccination Clinics operational in eight Kenyan counties. This innovation is now being adapted to meet the needs of communities and integrated into our programmes addressing other rising health challenges. In 2023, this will include the integration of health promotion and free-of-charge screening, diagnosis and treatment of non-communicable diseases (asthma, cancer, diabetes, hypertension) in Mobile Vaccination Clinic outreach.

Amref is also looking beyond COVID-19, working with our partners to strengthen health systems in preparation for future public health emergencies. Our work to build domestic laboratory testing and diagnostic systems means that African countries are better equipped to respond to emergencies while continuing to deliver essential health services.

The peaks and plateaux of the COVID-19 pandemic taught the global community about public health system readiness and response. Amref is continuing to learn from these lessons, to ensure that our programming is not only addressing the immediate effects of the pandemic but also the many repercussions felt for communities in disruption to other health services, to education and to livelihoods, to ensure we are working with our partners towards building lasting health change in Africa.

Nurses speak with a women during mobile COVID-19 vaccination drive in Nyamira County

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On behalf of everyone at Amref Health Africa, and the communities we work with, thank you for supporting our Vaccine Solidarity with Africa campaign. Together we can drive action to ready health systems for the next major challenge, and to respond to what communities need - better access to quality healthcare, for lasting health change.

If you would like to discuss the campaign or any further information, please get in touch:

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Annual Review and Accounts: <https://amrefuk.org/our-impact/impact-reports>

