



# Implementing a subnational COVID-19 vaccination campaign in South Sudan

## Pursuing 70 percent coverage in Aweil South

### Background

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, South Sudan has recorded 18,368 confirmed cases and 138 deaths.<sup>[1]</sup> The country received its first COVID-19 vaccine supply in March 2021, and the vaccination programme has since expanded to include 579 health facilities across 80 counties.<sup>[2]</sup>

However, the goal to achieve 70 percent coverage by mid-2022 — as outlined in the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Strategy to Achieve Global Vaccination<sup>[3]</sup> — has yet to be realised. To date, only 10.2 percent of the target population (people over 18 years), and just 4.6 percent of the total population, are fully vaccinated.<sup>[4]</sup> Inadequate operational funding to implement the COVID-19 vaccine programme has been a key barrier to full vaccination.<sup>[2]</sup> Rising conflict and flooding have also severely hampered access to healthcare for many hard-to-reach communities.

Since 2021, Malaria Consortium has been implementing the COVID-19 vaccination programme through our existing Health Pooled Fund III (HPF3) Lot 16 project. We are conducting a seven-day vaccination campaign in Aweil South to promote vaccination efforts and encourage community uptake.

### Country

South Sudan

### Donor

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, via UNICEF

### Length of project

January 2023 – February 2023

### Partners

Aweil South County Health Department  
Crown Agents  
Northern Bahr el Ghazal State Ministry of Health

### Strategic objective

Accelerating burden reduction to elimination



## Project outline and objectives

From November 2021 to December 2022, we reached a total of 53,579 people in Aweil South and Aweil Centre through HPF3 Lot 16, targeting communities through campaigns, mobile teams and outreach. In Aweil South alone, we successfully distributed COVID-19 vaccines to 58.1 percent of the targeted population, achieving full vaccination among this group.

Recognising the continued need for parallel COVID-19 intensification activities (such as routine facility-based vaccination, and use of mobile teams and outreaches for COVID-19 vaccination) alongside national campaigns over 2022–2024, we are building on our previous success with the 2023 campaign. This subnational campaign aims to increase vaccination efforts and strengthen the Ministry of Health's stewardship, coordination, policies and procedures.

We are targeting a total of 5,880 people over the course of the campaign, equating to approximately 70 people reached per day, over seven days.

## Activities

To carry out this campaign, Malaria Consortium will:

- work with the State Ministry of Health and Aweil South County Health Department (CHD) to
  - conduct state and county-level sensitisation meetings
  - develop micro-plans
  - collect, clean, analyse and disseminate campaign data
  - develop staff capacity to deliver and lead future campaigns
- facilitate pre-positioning of cold chain, vaccines and registration books prior to the campaign, and provide logistical support for campaign supervision

- recruit and train volunteers for 12 teams (each comprising two vaccinators, two mobilisers and two recorders) to administer the vaccine, accurately record data and submit reports, and mobilise communities ahead of the campaign; all volunteers will receive pay incentives
- train *boma* health workers (BHWs) to create campaign awareness to encourage unvaccinated people to attend the campaign — BHWs typically provide health education, referral and treatment for diarrhoea, pneumonia and malaria
- engage CHD and health facility staff, *payam* chiefs (*payam* are administrative divisions), women's groups, youth groups, BHWs, *boma* health committees, teachers and religious leaders to generate community support and promote uptake of the vaccine
- create awareness about the vaccine and its benefits, and generate interest among the community by:
  - airing messages via local radio, megaphone announcements and banners, as well as through community meetings
  - using local actors and musicians to perform plays and roadside shows at targeted locations, such as marketplaces, prisons, schools and churches.



## References

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3. WHO. Strategy to Achieve Global COVID-19 Vaccination by mid-2022; 2021. COVID-19: Scientific briefs. Available from: <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/strategy-to-achieve-global-covid-19-vaccination-by-mid-2022>.
4. Republic of South Sudan Ministry of Health. COVID-19 vaccinations dashboard and reports. [last updated 2022 May 06; cited 2022 Sep 23]. Available from: <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrljoiNDJlZGY4YWltMmM1My00M2E4LWFINDUtZjcxYzAyYmMyY2ZlZlwidCl6ImY2MTBjMG13LWlkMjQrNGlzOS04MTBiLTNkYzI4MGFmYjU5MCIslmMiOjhh9>.

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Cover image: A trained volunteer administers the COVID-19 vaccine, Panthou Health Facility, Aweil South

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