



ZIMBABWE COVID-19 VACCINE DEPLOYMENT AND VACCINATION PLAN SUMMARY

Introduction

Government through the Ministry of Health and Child Care has started rolling out COVID-19 vaccines as an additional layer of protection against COVID-19 infection. The vaccination programme was launched on 18 February 2021. Vaccination in all provinces and districts began on 22 February 2021 and is expected to continue until all eligible people have been vaccinated. The initial phase is being rolled out using Sinopharm's Verocell vaccine manufactured in the People's Republic of China. Successful implementation of the vaccination programme is expected to facilitate early return to normalcy in a country that has been severely affected by the global pandemic

Broad objective of the programme

- To roll out COVID-19 Vaccination in Zimbabwe as an additional layer of protection against COVID-19

Specific objectives

- To vaccinate and protect at least 60% of the total population and achieve herd immunity against COVID-19 in the shortest possible time
- To engage all key stakeholders and communities for COVID-19 vaccination success
- To provide adequate and safe COVID-19 vaccines and related supplies
- To ensure availability of adequate and functional cold chain equipment at all levels of healthcare delivery in the country
- To manage vaccination programme data and monitor all implementation activities
- To conduct ongoing vaccine safety surveillance and manage adverse events following immunisation that may occur according to national protocols

Vaccine deployment

- The country is working with guidance provided by regulatory bodies such as the Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe (MCAZ) through existing laws for importation of safe vaccines and their verification and clearance on arrival
- Advice from local expert groups such as Zimbabwe National Immunisation Technical Advisory Group (ZIMNITAG) and others informs choice of vaccines and vaccination implementation modalities
- All COVID-19 vaccines will be received and accounted for at the Central Vaccine Stores and distributed to all provinces according to calculated needs
- Vaccines will be transported to all levels in special vaccine delivery vehicles, cold boxes and vaccine carriers with temperature monitoring devices up to the point of use. The country has sufficient cold chain capacity to keep the current Sinopharm vaccine within recommended temperatures of 2 to 8°C down to rural health centre level (including for mobile outreach vaccination posts)

- Advance planning mechanisms are in place in the case of the country securing vaccines that have additional cold chain requirements than the one in place
- All other related supplies will be bundled and supplied to provinces according to vaccination needs
- A security plan has been put in place activated to safeguard all the vaccines up to the point of use

Vaccination plan

Who will be vaccinated in this programme?

- All people in Zimbabwe who are eligible for available vaccines will be vaccinated
- Vaccination will be conducted in phases for different target groups follows:

Phase one caters for COVID-19 frontline workers. These include health and other social workers who are at greater risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19. Security personnel, ports of entry staff and schools staff fall into this category.

Phase two targets people with pre-existing chronic conditions. These include those with diabetes, hypertension and other heart, lung and kidney conditions and those living with HIV. Also targeted in this phase are people in confined settlements and institutions like prisons, refugee camps

Phase three targets the remainder of the eligible population for available COVID-19 vaccines

NB: All people are encouraged to continue to observe current recommended COVID-19 prevention measures while they await their turn for vaccination

How and where vaccination services will be provided

- The main vaccination delivery modes will be through static sites like hospitals and clinics throughout the country and mobile vaccination outreaches
- Outreach teams will visit areas that are far away from health centres and those in institutions such as prisons, refugee camps, old people's homes , schools, border post, airports and other workplaces to provide vaccines
- Details of vaccination team movement will be provided by local health teams
- Vaccines will be provided free of charge by trained health workers

Advocacy and Communication

- National and local level programme launches will set the pace for vaccination and increase positive media coverage
- Advocacy and key stakeholder engagement meetings will be conducted at all levels
- Community education and mobilisation will be conducted through mass media campaigns, interpersonal communication, and social media campaigns
- Training of health workers and orientation of the media on campaign coverage will be done
- All activities will be complemented by development of evidence-based communication materials

Data management and surveillance

- Vaccinations statistics will be collected daily using specially designed data collection and consolidation tools and registers in addition to an electronic vaccination record
- All vaccinated people will receive a vaccination card which they will also use for their second dose
- A safety monitoring plan for swift identification and management of AEFI is in place
- Data will be cleaned on daily basis at the data command centre and shared with the public and the media through official Ministry channels
- Surveillance and management of Adverse Events Following Immunisation will be an ongoing function using existing national guidelines and structures in all provinces and districts

- Routine assessments for vaccine efficacy in the local context will be conducted among those selected for the purpose and is an ongoing activity as with other vaccines and medicines in the country

Programme Management and coordination

- A national command centre for vaccination has been established to identify, discuss and address key issues for the success of the programme in real time
- Planning, training, coordination and resource mobilisation meetings will be held regularly throughout the vaccination exercise
- National, provincial and district supervisors will monitor and provide targeted support and supervision to vaccination teams using a standard checklist

Evaluation

- Rapid convenience monitoring (RCM) will be conducted during vaccination using a standard questionnaire to assess and address vaccination coverage gaps
- A post campaign coverage survey (PCCS) and a post introduction evaluation for COVID-19 vaccination will be conducted as with all new vaccine introductions in the country
- Vaccination campaign review meetings will be held at predetermined stages to inform next implementation stages

Key messages on COVID-19 vaccination programme in Zimbabwe

- Available COVID-19 vaccines are safe and they provide immunity and protect us, and our communities from severe forms of COVID 19 .
- It is important to get the COVID -19 vaccine immediately when your turn comes.
- The vaccination process in Zimbabwe will be done in phases starting with those at highest risk until all eligible people are covered. Meanwhile we all need to continue using all available tools to help stop the spread of COVID-19, such as frequent handwashing with soap, physical distancing and the use of masks.
- Safety and efficacy tests have been done on COVID 19 vaccines in use in Zimbabwe and regulatory assessments and authorization to import them has been granted in accordance with national laws
- Safety monitoring for all COVID-19 vaccines in Zimbabwe will be conducted throughout the vaccination period
- While vaccines are now available for some people in the initial phase, it is critical that all of us continue to follow all the COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviours, to ensure that we stay protected.