



## The USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) Program

The USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) Program enables low- and middle-income countries to strengthen their pharmaceutical systems, which is pivotal to better health outcomes and higher-performing health systems. The program is implemented by a consortium of global and local partners, led by Management Sciences for Health (MSH), a global health nonprofit.

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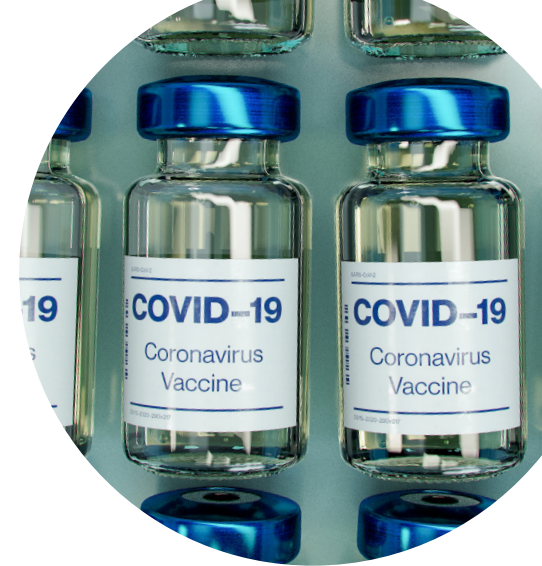
# FACILITATING SUCCESSFUL INTRODUCTION OF COVID-19 VACCINES

Scientists worldwide are racing to develop a vaccine for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. The [COVAX initiative](#),<sup>1</sup> led by a global collaboration of Gavi - the Vaccine Alliance, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, and WHO, is accelerating the process and aims to ensure rapid and equitable access to safe and effective vaccine options. COVAX's goal is to end the acute phase of the global pandemic by the end of 2021. With the global push, the world's first supply of COVID-19 vaccine authorized for emergency use by the U.S. FDA and other regulatory authorities has become available at the end of 2020.<sup>2</sup>

For countries, making decisions on COVID-19 vaccine options and introduction, deployment, and monitoring poses complex challenges to governments. Success will depend on how key essential components of the introduction process are planned, implemented, monitored, and evaluated. The USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) Program can assist countries with cross-cutting technical expertise to enable timely access and adequate and equitable distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine.

## MTaPS' Support for COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment, Implementation, and Monitoring

MTaPS' approach to support countries with national planning and deployment of COVID-19 vaccines is aligned with WHO's guidance and donors' best practices. MTAps is equipped with [technical teams in over a dozen countries](#) for immediate assistance in seven key areas that are pivotal to successful introduction of COVID-19 vaccines.



Vaccine mockup from  
[Unsplash.com/D.Schludi](https://unsplash.com/D.Schludi)

### MTaPS' approach to country support

- Tailor assistance based on a rapid situational analysis and responding to country's needs and Mission priorities
- Leverage existing local structures and systems for quick response
- Design interventions on principles of pharmaceutical system strengthening to steer health system gains
- Apply and integrate proven tools, such as for pharmacovigilance and supply chain management

<sup>1</sup> Gavi, <https://www.gavi.org/vaccineswork/covax-explained>

<sup>2</sup> The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html)

<sup>3</sup> WHO, Guidance on developing a national deployment and vaccination plan for COVID-19 vaccines

# MTaPS' Technical Areas of Assistance

**1 Evidence-based policy, coordination, and planning** 

Support the country in assessing and planning based on vaccine efficacy, safety data, and costs and benefits.

- Rapid situational analysis of national preparedness
- Adaptation of vaccine allocation & distribution frameworks
- Comparative technical analyses for decision-making on vaccine(s)

- Establishment/adaptation of institutional arrangements
- Development of National Deployment Vaccination Plan<sup>4</sup>

**2 Financing Strategy** 

Map financing sources, determine gaps, and help develop a financing strategy.

- Costing and budget impact assessments
- Value-for-money analyses
- Financial flow analyses & tracking
- Resource mobilization & sustainability
- Access to global mechanisms

**3 Regulatory support for vaccines & supplies** 

Work with regulatory authorities to rapidly introduce quality-assured vaccines and related equipment and supplies.

- Expedited emergency use authorization & registration
- Facilitation of bilateral deals and imports
- Alignment of medicine and pharmacy laws & regulations
- Requirements and processes for safety monitoring

**4 Procurement and supply chain management** 

Help develop quick and responsive supply chain solutions that factor in cold chain requirements to preserve vaccine stability.


- Vaccine procurement and supply chain strategy & planning
- Estimating vaccine demand and prioritization/quantification
- Rapid evaluation & strengthening of cold chain
- Integrated distribution systems, inventory management, and visibility

**5 Vaccine service delivery and patient safety** 


Assist with defining approaches and providing immunization services and setting up active patient safety monitoring.

- Pharmacovigilance regulations and guidelines
- Enhanced spontaneous reporting for tracking adverse reactions to vaccines, including global reporting
- Active surveillance systems for adverse events of special interest
- AEFI\* causality analysis, decision making & communication
- Tracking adherence to immunization protocols

\* AEFI: Adverse events following immunization

**6 Advocacy and social mobilization** 

Help develop a communications strategy, advocacy materials, and local partnerships to engage communities, address concerns, and prevent the spread of misinformation and negative perceptions.

**7 Monitoring and evaluation** 

Develop a vaccine introduction results framework and monitoring plan that will reflect the needs of the country.

<sup>4</sup> Includes adaptation of the available frameworks and other key elements related to country implementation (e.g., national coordination structures and mechanisms, stakeholders' accountability/responsibility).