

## Innovation With Impact:

The Meningitis Vaccine Project: India Uses an Innovative Partnership to Help the Poorest Have Access to Life-Saving Vaccines



Innovative global partnership leverages funding, technical capacity and existing technology to create a low-cost, effective vaccine to fight meningitis illness, disability, and deaths in Africa.

**Problem:** Periodic epidemics of meningitis threaten 450 million people across 25 African countries, known as the “Meningitis Belt.”

- Ten percent of those infected die and a quarter of survivors suffer permanent mental and physical disabilities.
- High production costs of the vaccine used in rich countries made widespread vaccine distribution prohibitive.

**Innovation:** Dynamic partnership that combined new technology, resources, and manufacturing capability to set an affordable price and overcome the high costs and long timeframes typical of vaccine development.

- The World Health Organization (WHO) and the international nonprofit PATH founded the Meningitis Vaccine Project (MVP), a dynamic partnership spanning rich, rapidly growing, and poor countries, that brought together:

**Technology from two traditional aid donors the Netherlands and the United States**

- SynCo Bio Partners, a Dutch vaccine manufacturing company, designed a low-cost process to produce one component of the vaccine, which it shipped in volume to an Indian vaccine manufacturer.
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER) developed the technology to increase the vaccine’s effectiveness and duration of protection and provided technical support to India.

### **Vaccine expertise and production capacity from a leading vaccine manufacturing company in India**

- The Serum Institute of India produced a safe, effective vaccine for less than \$0.50 per dose using its low-cost manufacturing facilities.

Public education, clinical trial oversight, and funding by African governments

- Health ministries in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger conducted broad public education and outreach to build trust in and demand for the vaccine in addition to contributing economic support.
- The vaccine was launched on December 6, 2010, by the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, in the presence of other African leaders and ministers, and representatives of all MVP partners.

**Impact:** MenAfriVac, the first vaccine developed specifically for Africa was developed, tested and produced in less than half the time and at less than one-tenth the US\$500 million cost typical of bringing a new vaccine to market. The vaccine dramatically reduced death and illness from meningitis in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger.

- Within weeks of the vaccine being launched, nearly 20 million people age one to 29 were vaccinated against meningitis in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. Six months later, the three countries reported the lowest number of confirmed meningitis A cases ever recorded during an epidemic season.
- The GAVI Alliance is now funding new vaccination campaigns in Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria creating a block of immunized populations. By the end of 2011, 65 million people are expected to receive the new vaccine.
- Research shows that the use of MenAfriVac across affected countries in West and Central Africa could prevent more than one million cases of illness and free up US\$300 million spent on diagnosis and treatment over ten years.

### **Meningitis Vaccine Project video:**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=JKMObQNOYRQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=JKMObQNOYRQ)

### **PATH Infographic:**

<http://www.path.org/menafriVac/timeline.php>

### **More Information:**

[www.meningvax.org](http://www.meningvax.org)