



COVID-19 information note 22

Planned September 2022 campaign: turning COVID-19 vaccine doses into vaccinated people

COVID-19 vaccine doses administered since 16 March 2021: more than 4.5 million

The first batch of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccine (SII/COVISHIELD) supplies arrived in Somalia on 15 March 2021, and the first dose was administered in the country on 16 March 2021. Since then, more than 4.5 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in Somalia up to 25 August 2022. Thus, at least 15% of the eligible population (older than 18 years) in the country are fully vaccinated and another 13% are partially vaccinated. This is equal to 26.68 doses of COVID-19 vaccines administered per 100 population.

The adult immunization programme for COVID-19 vaccines has always been challenging in every country and Somalia has been no exception. In addition to low demand, the huge operational cost required to deliver and administer the vaccines hindered the optimal uptake of COVID-19 vaccines in Somalia. The other compounding factor was the difficulty people had to access vaccination centres owing to geographic distance and, to some extent, security concerns. By the end of 2021, the country was able to fully vaccinate only 5.5% of its people, which fell far behind WHO's target of reaching at least 40% of the population by that time. However, since then, the number of eligible people fully vaccinated in the country has increased by

Highlights

- 4.5 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in Somalia but full vaccination coverage is still only 15%.
- Somalia aims to have fully vaccinated 40% of its population by the end of 2022.
- To this end, WHO has planned a 10-day accelerated campaign to administer 3.5 million COVID-19 vaccine doses across the country to boost fully vaccinated coverage to 35%.
- The campaign will be integrated within routine immunization with 5714 vaccination teams being deployed across the country.
- To reach the remaining 5% of the population and achieve the 40% target, a responsive strategy will be needed.
- Investment in COVID vaccination provides an ideal opportunity to build health systems resilience.

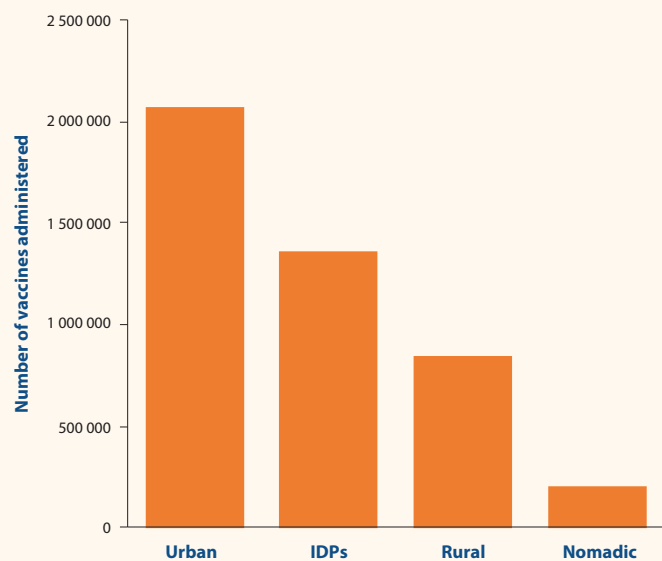
almost 10% in fewer than 8 months. However, this is not enough as the country is aiming to have 40% of its eligible population fully vaccinated by end of 2022. To achieve this target will require an accelerated effort, strong political commitment and active engagement of the government.

Reduced vaccine inequity: 29% increase in vaccination of internally displaced people

Internally displaced people and nomadic populations have always been a part of the national COVID-19 vaccine deployment plan and state-level micro-plans in Somalia. These populations have been considered in all accelerated campaigns for COVID-19 vaccines in the past. During the initial days of roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines (September 2021), vaccine inequity among the internally displaced

people and nomadic populations was noticeable. As reported before, more people living in urban areas (92.5%) than rural areas (6.1%) were vaccinated¹ and very few people living in camps for internally displaced people (0.7%), refugee camps (0.1%) and nomadic settlements (0.6%) were vaccinated. However, current data of August 2022 (Figure 1) show that of the 4.5 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines administered in the country so far, 1 365 205 doses (30.4%) were given to internally displaced people – an increase of 29% vaccine access in a year. In addition, 203 659 nomadic people and 16 728 refugees received COVID-19 vaccines during 2022.

Figure 1. COVID-19 vaccination among populations of concern, Somalia, August 2022



IDPs: internally displaced people.

By December 2022, 40% COVID-19 vaccination coverage: a realistic target for Somalia

In 2021, WHO set the following vaccine coverage targets for countries to end of the COVID-19 pandemic around the world:

- by end September 2021, 10% coverage of the population in all countries
- by end December 2021, 40% coverage in all countries
- by end June 2022, 70% coverage in all countries.

Even though Somalia accelerated its vaccination drive and vaccine availability improved in 2022, the country missed the WHO target of vaccinating at least 40% of its population by December 2021. Based on the current vaccination uptake trend, availability of vaccines and the country's COVID-19 vaccine utilization capacity, Somalia has set a target of fully vaccinating 40% of its population by end of December 2022.

Vaccine availability and forecasted needs to reach the 40% target

The initial unpredictable supply situation, which continued throughout 2021, disrupted the vaccination drive. This may be one of the reasons behind the low coverage of the second dose due to mistrust of the community. Up to December 2021, Somalia had received delivery of 2 051 200 doses of COVID-19 vaccines, of which 85% had been administered. As of August 2022, a total of 9.9 million COVID vaccine doses were received by the country either through the COVAX facility or through donations. About 6.2 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been distributed so far in 2022 to support vaccination across the country. Based on current projections, the country will need 3,832,144 million doses of one dose and 7,664,288 doses of two dose COVID-19 vaccines to reach the target of fully vaccinating 40% of its eligible population by December 2022.



¹ COVID-19 information note 14. Reflections from the COVID-19 vaccination campaign and future directions. <http://www.emro.who.int/images/stories/somalia/documents/covid-19-information-note-14.pdf>

September 10-day accelerated campaign: administering 3.5 million COVID-19 vaccine doses

WHO is planning to conduct an accelerated campaign for COVID-19 vaccines during September 2022 using its own polio workforce. The target for this campaign is to administer between 3.5 and 4 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines in the country across all states. It is planned to administer Johnson & Johnson vaccines in all states, including Somaliland, over a 10 day period in September. During this campaign more than 200 of WHO's own staff will be deployed to organize the campaign. At the same time,

WHO will support the deployment of 5714 teams across the country comprising 11 429 vaccinators, 11 429 data assistants, 11 429 social mobilizers and 5714 supervisors (Table 1).

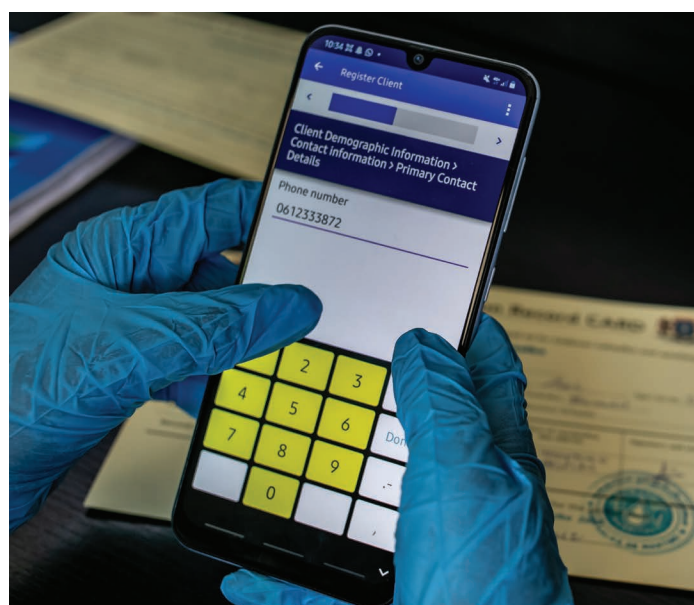
This campaign, if successfully completed to reach its goal, will increase the probability of reaching 40% coverage of COVID-19 vaccination in the country by December 2022. This campaign is planned to be launched in addition to other ongoing and routine roll out plans for improving coverage of COVID-19 vaccines like vaccination through fixed and outreach centres which has proved to be effective in the past.

Table 1. Doses of COVID-19 vaccines (Johnson & Johnson) to be administered and teams deployed in the accelerated campaign, September 2022

Place	Population	Target population	Doses required for the accelerated campaign	Teams and human resources to be deployed, no.				
				Teams	Vaccinators	Data assistants	Social mobilizers	Supervisors
Banadir	2 099 550	500 000	500 000	715	1429	1429	1428	715
Galmudug	895 466	600 000	600 000	857	1714	1714	1714	857
Jubaland	1 731 105	600 000	600 000	857	1714	1714	1714	857
SWS	3 004 650	700 000	700 000	1000	2000	2000	2000	1000
Hirshabele	1 318 999	600 000	600 000	857	1714	1714	1714	857
Puntland	2 525 976	600 000	600 000	857	1714	1714	1714	857
Somaliland	4 094 784	40 0000	400 000	571	1143	1142	1142	571
Total	15 670 530	4 000 000	4 000 000	5 714	11 429	11 428	11 428	5 714

Expected outcome of the 10-day campaign: a leap from 16% to 35% fully vaccinated coverage

In order to reach 40% coverage by the end of December 2022, Somalia has to fully vaccinate (either using a one-dose COVID-19 vaccine or a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine) an additional 3 832 144 eligible individuals between September and December. The current daily uptake of COVID-19 vaccine is 13 819 doses based on data available on the use of vaccines over the past 8 months (January to August 2022). Thus to reach 40% coverage, the country needs to administer 31 934 doses of COVID-19 vaccines daily, which is a 3 fold increase on the current pace. However, over a 10-day period, if the country is able to achieve its target of administering at least 3.4 million doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, the country's COVID-19



vaccine coverage is expected to rapidly increase to 35%, a substantial increase from the current coverage of 15.5%. In order to achieve this nationwide, the 5714 vaccination teams, each team with two social mobilizers, two vaccinators and two data assistants, will be required to vaccinate around 350 000 to 400 000 people every day for 10 days in Somalia (Figure 2).

The expected outcome from the accelerated vaccination campaign in September will be aligned with the objective of increasing the fully vaccinated individual status in the country (Table 2). The campaign will benefit places, South West, Somaliland and Puntland most as these areas have lower coverage than the rest.

Figure 2. Current and forecasted COVID-19 vaccination targets to reach 40% total population coverage, Somalia, 2022

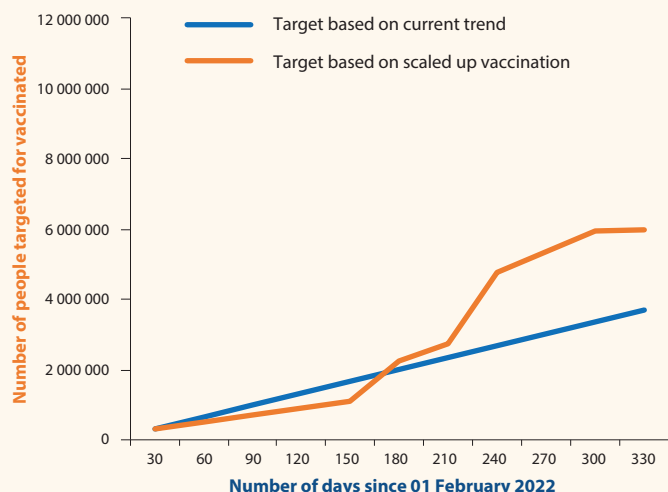


Table 2. Expected outcome of the accelerated COVID-19 vaccination campaign

Places	Proportion of the population fully vaccinated (%)	
	Current	Expected after accelerated campaign
Banadir	48.73	72
Galmudug	13.87	80
Hirshabelle	6.62	30
Jubaland	19.26	53
South West	11.80	57
Puntland	8.57	28
Somaliland	9.29	19

Reaching 40% fully vaccinated coverage in Somalia by the end of 2022

If this 10-day campaign is successful, this will mean that within the period of October to December 2022, the country may be able to fully vaccinate the remaining 5 % of the population and achieve its target of 40% coverage by December 2022.

A responsive and agile strategy will be needed to vaccinate all people older than 18 years in Somalia and reach the target. In view of the challenges faced during the previous COVID-19 vaccine campaign, the following operational strategies may help boost vaccine uptake if planned effectively: addressing vaccine hesitancy; developing microplans for each district/region/state; organizing outreach services for nomadic people, refugees and internally displaced people as well as other marginalized communities; vaccinating health care workers in the public and private health sector; protecting staff in high-contact settings; engaging the

private sector; organizing ring vaccination; and improving coordination and timely supply of all the needed resources.

A customized method will be needed, taking into consideration the lessons learnt from implementation of vaccination in 2021 and early 2022, with a blend of outreach and fixed-site services, especially in federal member states, and innovative integrated implementation and coordination with different programmes, such as routine immunization, polio eradication and health emergencies.

Integrating the accelerated campaign with routine immunization

The accelerated campaign will be integrated with the routine childhood immunization and every opportunity will be used to identify and vaccinate a zero-dose children as the same infrastructure used for routine immunization will be used for this accelerated campaign for COVID-19. During the last round of the accelerated campaign for COVID-19

vaccination, 765 257 children younger than 2 years who were due vaccinations or who had missed out on vaccinations and women of child-bearing age received vaccines in accordance with the Expanded Programme on Immunization policy of the government².

Conclusion: building health systems resilience

The investment in COVID vaccination provides an ideal opportunity to strengthen immunization delivery systems and infrastructure to ensure improved vaccine access and equity for routine immunization as well as for other vaccine-preventable diseases. Furthermore, the system built to respond to COVID-19 and the efforts made to vaccinate the population against COVID-19 can be used to improve and strengthen the health system in Somalia in the following areas.

- Strengthen national regulatory systems.
- Improve essential aspects of the vaccine-delivery chain, including creating and maintaining an efficient and environmentally friendly cold chain and a high-quality, large-capacity storage infrastructure.
- Digitalize registration and vaccine information systems for tracking vaccines and monitoring vaccination side-effects.
- Establish health care waste management systems.
- Establish effective pharmacovigilance for routine immunization.
- Develop a health communication strategy to tackle vaccine hesitancy for other diseases, especially hesitancy in childhood immunization.
- Deliver other priority interventions for mother and child health in combination with delivery of COVID-19 vaccines.



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² COVID-19 information note 19. Accelerated immunization campaign for COVID-19 and childhood vaccines, Somalia, November 2021–January 2022: progress and lessons learnt (<http://www.emro.who.int/images/stories/somalia/documents/covid-19-information-note-20.pdf?ua=1>).

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