



DRIVE Demand Zambia: Accelerating Vaccination Demand Planning and Generation with Digital Tools

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged immunization programs around the world. Recent data indicate that both structural and behavioral challenges to generating vaccine demand will continue to hinder vaccination uptake among many populations. To help accelerate COVID-19 vaccination campaigns, catch young children up on missed routine immunizations, and vaccinate “zero-dose babies” born during the pandemic, many governments have introduced or expanded the use of digital health tools in their immunization and health systems. Digital tools and approaches can provide critical data to aid public health authorities in their overall immunization microplanning and response. Global support for the use of standardized digital tools to generate vaccine demand and promote equitable vaccine delivery, for both COVID-19 vaccines and routine immunizations, demonstrates the buy-in and momentum behind this approach. Digital tools are not the singular answer, but they are a critical part of a broader solution for real health impact to save lives.

About the DRIVE Demand project

Digital Square and The Rockefeller Foundation launched the **Digital Results Improve Vaccine Equity and Demand** (DRIVE Demand) project in June 2022, with the ultimate goal to increase vaccine demand and acceptance rates in six countries. By driving demand for COVID-19 vaccination awareness, acceptance, and activation, the project aims to increase overall vaccine uptake while strengthening broader routine immunization programs for long-term sustainability. DRIVE Demand is guided by The Rockefeller Foundation’s Global Vaccine Initiative’s approach to supporting iterative, country-driven efforts to increase demand for vaccination. This approach simultaneously addresses barriers to vaccination—such as access, trust, and information—that have been consistently underestimated and misunderstood, while leveraging digital and data tools to drive more effective and proactive vaccine interventions.

As a global project, DRIVE Demand has three key objectives:

1. Strengthen country adaptations of globally recognized, standards-based digital systems to increase COVID-19 vaccine demand, delivery, and uptake, while also targeting routine immunization more broadly.
2. Foster social and behavior change by conducting research and related impact evaluation studies at the country level; synthesizing findings per country; and documenting and sharing cross-cutting findings to mitigate vaccine hesitancy and drive demand, both for COVID-19 and routine vaccinations.
3. Monitor, evaluate, and analyze the findings to develop an evidence base of hyperlocal best practices around COVID-19 vaccination awareness, acceptance, and activation to be shared to foster scale.

DRIVE Demand activities in Zambia

With investment from The Rockefeller Foundation, Digital Square and Ona are collaborating with the Zambia Ministry of Health (MOH) to enhance the Zambia Electronic Immunization Registry (ZEIR), an existing routine immunization system to capture vaccination data for children under five years of age. To respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare a national system that can serve future immunization and pandemic needs, the MOH has requested technical support to expand ZEIR to include COVID-19 vaccine tracking for adults over the age of 18. COVID-19 information is currently being tracked in a parallel system, the District Health Information Software 2 (DHIS2) Tracker. Adapting ZEIR to be compliant with Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR) standards and interoperable with DHIS2 will provide the potential for one national platform to capture both routine childhood vaccinations and adult immunizations. This work will also expand the reach of ZEIR from Southern and Western provinces into Lusaka Province, the most populous province in the country.

As part of this work, Digital Square will support ZEIR's adoption of FHIR-compliant standards, which are a best practice for data use and health information exchange security. ZEIR will be further enhanced through the integration of MOH's existing static facility maps. SMS capacity through RapidPro/WhatsApp will support social behavior change communications and vaccine demand generation. To demonstrate how to implement and use the system, the Zambia MOH will provide ZEIR training to health workers in Kafue District in Lusaka Province and Kazungula and Livingstone in Southern Province. Additional geographic expansion will be implemented as feasible. DRIVE Demand will support the MOH to develop a sustainability plan for COVID-19 vaccination data with a targeted focus on integration across systems.



Digital Square's role

Digital Square is a multi-donor co-investment mechanism established by USAID and managed by PATH to coordinate funding of proven digital health solutions for global health impact. As the key implementer of the DRIVE Demand project, Digital Square will harness its experience in coordination, collaboration, and communication with partners—and experience working via country and regional offices—to increase visibility into how digital tools are being adapted to support COVID-19 vaccination efforts. DRIVE Demand will work closely with the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization, Gavi, and other health implementing donors and partners across project country geographies.