



## Advancing Local Solutions and Innovations for Lasting Impact: Applying Strategies from COVID-19 Vaccination to Routine Immunization

Wednesday, December 6, 2023  
9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

### OPENING SPEAKERS

**Sarah B. Barnes** is the Director of the Maternal Health Initiative program at the Wilson Center. Barnes works closely with practitioners, researchers, donors, international development agencies, and policy makers to connect issues of gender, maternal and global health, and women's leadership to foreign policy. She is also the editor of the Dot-Mom column on *New Security Beat* and has authored several reports and articles.

**Dr. Folake Olayinka** is the Immunization Technical Lead at the Office of Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). She is a globally recognized leader with expertise in strengthening routine immunization systems, polio eradication, maternal and child health, malaria, HIV/AIDS, sexual and reproductive health, and adolescent reproductive health. In her current role at USAID as the Global Immunization Technical Lead, she oversees a multidisciplinary team and portfolio, and brings extensive policy and programmatic experience for tailored immunization systems, adaptive implementation strategies, vaccination demand, and uptake, with expertise in country capacity strengthening, health systems and integration within Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) and primary health care programs.

**Grace Chee** is the Project Director of USAID's MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project at JSI. She has over 25 years of experience in health financing, immunization financing, health system strengthening, and maternal and child health programs. Prior to her current role, she led the coordination team for Gavi's Learning Network for Countries in Transition (LNCT) supporting countries transitioning from Gavi support to self-sustainable immunization programs. She has successfully led numerous teams conducting health system assessments, private sector assessments, program evaluations, and provided technical assistance to support program implementation.

### LIGHTNING TALKS

**Rebecca Fields** is the Immunization Technical Director of USAID's MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project at JSI. She has over 35 years of experience in immunization, serving in technical capacities on USAID global technical leadership projects and programs supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, World Health Organization, Gavi, and UNICEF. Ms. Fields also co-authored *Immunization Essentials: A Practical Field Guide*, USAID's e-learning course on immunization and wrote

country guidance documents for the World Health Organization on vaccination in the second year of life and periodic intensification of routine immunization.

**Ana Costache** is the Technical Officer of USAID's MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project at JSI. In her role, she primarily focuses on engaging USAID COVID-19 vaccination implementing partners in active dialogue and knowledge exchange, including co-leading a USAID COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Assistance Implementing Partners Forum, addressing the many challenges countries confronted during the pandemic. As a Technical Officer, Ms. Costache contributes to activities related to supply chain optimization and improving uptake of COVID-19 vaccines and routine immunizations, applying human-centered design principles across Eastern Europe and Africa.

**Tewodros Alemayehu** is the Ethiopia Immunization Project Director of USAID's MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project at JSI. He is a public health specialist with over 20 years of experience, and over the last seven years, he has worked with JSI in Ethiopia to improve routine immunization quality and equity through strengthening the health system. He also led the implementation of the MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project, which focused on COVID-19 vaccination demand creation and increasing uptake.

**Constant Kingongo** is the Monitoring and Evaluation Lead of USAID's MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity at PATH. Mr. Kingongo leads project monitoring, evaluation, and learning, and interventions to strengthen vaccination data quality and use to reach more children and adults with immunization services in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

## **PANEL DISCUSSION**

**Dr. Rajani B N** is the Deputy Director of Immunization at Directorate of Health & Family Welfare Services in Karnataka, India. She is a senior medical doctor whose administrative and managerial acumen led her to hold managerial positions within the Directorate of Health Services, where she has been leading national health programs related to Nutrition, Leprosy, and Routine Immunization for six years as Deputy Director. Dr. Rajani has worked to strengthen routine immunization in India by leading initiatives such as National Immunization Days, technology-enabled initiatives, Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI) surveillance, school vaccination campaigns, and measures to strengthen urban immunization.

**Dr. Gopal Krishna Soni** is the India Country Lead of USAID's Momentum Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project at JSI. Dr. Soni is a physician with over 25 years of experience working in Public Health with a focus on immunization. In his current role, Dr. Soni is responsible for providing overall guidance to national and state Governments for effective implementation of COVID-19 vaccination programs across 18 states in India. He has been an integral player reviewing routine immunization programs at the national and state levels and networking with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and other key stakeholders.

**Dr. Maria Joannes Uzoma** is the Executive Secretary of Imo State Primary Health Care Development Agency in Nigeria. Dr. Maria Joannes Uzoma is a fellow of the West African College of Surgeons in OBGYN and studied medicine at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

**Dr Isaac Mugoya** is the Kenya Country Lead of USAID's MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project at JSI. A trained epidemiologist with over 16 years of experience in immunization programming, he joined JSI in 2012 as an immunization technical advisor with the USAID's Maternal and Child Integrated Program and the Maternal and Child Survival Program. Prior to joining JSI, he worked for the Kenya Ministry of Health as the Deputy Head of the Kenya Expanded Program on Immunization. Dr. Mugoya continues to provide valuable technical support and advice to the National Vaccines and Immunization Program and participates in regional working groups for immunization.

**Dr. Betuel Sigaúque** is the Mozambique Country Lead of USAID's MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project at JSI. Dr. Betuel Sigaúque is a Mozambican medical doctor with over 20 years of experience working in public health, primary health care and biomedical research, delivering maternal and child health services including routine immunization services in Mozambique. Dr. Sigaúque has worked with JSI since 2016 to improve health system efficiency by designing and introducing high level policies and several national guidelines on child health and routine immunization services.

**Dr. Joel Yakubu Cherima** is the Nigeria Country Lead of USAID's MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project at JSI. Dr. Cherima previously served as Project Director for Global Fund Malaria and the Senior Maternal and Child Program Manager at USAID Nigeria leading the immunization and infectious disease portfolio. He was the Health Humanitarian Advisor for USAID's Mission in Nigeria from 2014-2019 where he co-led the Embassy's interagency process for planning and coordinating U.S. support to Nigeria's response to the Boko Haram insurgency. Dr. Cherima is a distinguished holder of the National Honors Award of the rank of Officer of The Order of the Niger (OON).

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

**Nida Parks** is the COVID-19 Response Coordinator for the Global Health Bureau at USAID. Previously, Ms. Parks served as the Deputy Director of the Global Health Bureau COVID-19 Response Team, and as the Acting Director of the Vaccine Access and Delivery Initiative. She also served as the Division Chief for Strategic Coordination and Communication in the Office of HIV/AIDS and as a Deputy Principal for USAID's PEPFAR portfolio. Before joining USAID, Ms. Park's work spanned from field-based HIV research and program implementation in Eastern and Southern Africa, to global private sector partnerships, and project design and evaluation for domestic HIV services.