

## MenAfriVac® - Meningitis A Vaccine

With more than one million cases reported since 1988 and tens of thousands of deaths to its name, meningococcal meningitis is one of the most feared diseases in Africa. It has paralyzed entire communities under the weight of sprawling illness, overburdened health systems, and economic hardship. Until recently, no reliable vaccine against the deadly scourge existed to meet Africa's needs.

U.S. government support and collaboration ensured the introduction of a new meningitis A vaccine in the "meningitis belt" stretching across the African continent. The introduction of MenAfriVac® in 2010 via mass vaccination campaigns has had an immediate and dramatic impact in breaking the cycle of meningitis A epidemics. In the years since its first introduction in Burkina Faso, more than 235 million people 1 through 29 years of age have been immunized across the meningitis belt and meningitis A has virtually disappeared wherever the vaccine has been used. As of April 2016, 17 of the 26 meningitis belt countries have rolled out MenAfriVac®. The remaining countries should introduce the vaccine in 2016 and 2017. By 2020, the vaccine is expected to protect more than 400 million people – preventing 1 million cases of meningitis A; 150,000 deaths; and 250,000 cases of severe disability.<sup>i, ii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Meningitis A Nearly Eliminated in Africa through Vaccination, Reaching More than 235 million People. Available at: <http://www.afro.who.int/en/media-centre/pressreleases/item/8360-meningitis-a-nearly-eliminated-in-africa-through-vaccination.html>. Accessed September 22, 2016.

<sup>ii</sup> Putting an end to epidemic meningitis in Africa. Available at: [http://www.path.org/publications/files/VAC\\_mena\\_fs.pdf](http://www.path.org/publications/files/VAC_mena_fs.pdf). Accessed September 28, 2016.