Behavioral Science Immunization Network

Globally, progress towards high, equitable vaccination coverage has been uneven. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a decline in childhood vaccination and exacerbated existing inequity. To strengthen routine immunization and overcome the challenges that have led to a decline in vaccination, it is critical to improve the understanding of and address factors associated with low vaccine acceptance and uptake. Behavioral science, the evidence-based study of how people behave, make decisions, and respond to context, offers promise in designing interventions to increase vaccine uptake. However, its application in immunization has been limited to date.

Through the Behavioral Science Immunization Network (BeSIN) project, JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc., Sabin Vaccine Institute, and local partners like the Ghana Health Service, are supporting efforts to strengthen the capacity of immunization practitioners to use behavioral science to improve immunization confidence and uptake. The project's primary objectives are to:

- Strengthen the capacity of health and immunization professionals to understand and apply behavioral science approaches to develop effective interventions to increase immunization confidence and uptake.
- Increase offline and online coordination, collaboration, and learning among immunization experts, behavioral and social scientists, civil society stakeholders, and other partners involved in social and behavior change programming in Ghana.
- Collaborate with local partners to use human-centered design to develop and test behaviorally-informed interventions to increase COVID-19 vaccine uptake among urban populations in Accra.

Throughout the life of the project, JSI will collaborate with Ghanaian government, academic, and civil society stakeholders to identify ways to continue to strengthen behavioral science competencies and sustain and maintain the use of behavioral science in health policies and programs, with a focus on immunization.

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[1]UN Innovation Network.United Nations Practitioner's Guide to Getting Started with Behavioral Science. 2022. https://www.uninnovation.network/assets/BeSci/UN_PractitionersGuideToGettingStartedWithBeSci_2022.pdf.