

# Six in One: How Sabin is Supporting Hexavalent Vaccine Adoption

## PROJECT SNAPSHOT

The hexavalent vaccine protects against six diseases in one shot—improving efficiency, cutting costs, and saving lives. Through the **Hexavalent Vaccine (Switch) Assessment Consortium (HeVAC)**, Sabin and partners\* are generating timely evidence and fostering collaboration to support smooth adoption. With potential to help nearly 130 low- and middle-income countries expand coverage, this vaccine can reach under-immunized children and move us closer to ending vaccine-preventable diseases.

## The Opportunity

In many countries, weak health systems, limited staff, and hard-to-reach communities leave children without vital vaccines. To address this, global partners — including WHO, Gavi, and UNICEF — helped countries introduce the pentavalent (penta) vaccine in 2005, protecting against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B, and Hib. Now, the hexavalent (hexa) vaccine — already common in high-income countries — adds protection against polio, covering six diseases in one shot. For low- and middle-income countries, shifting from separate penta and polio vaccines to hexa brings key advantages:

- **Greater efficiency:** Fewer doses (six reduced to three) lower costs for vaccines, storage, and health worker time.
- **Stronger disease control:** Simplified schedules help reach more children, reducing under-immunization and disease outbreaks.

The hexavalent vaccine also advances global polio eradication by combining penta and inactivated poliovirus (IPV) vaccines.

### Pentavalent

vs.

### Hexavalent


#### DISEASE PROTECTION:

Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B, and Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib)

Five diseases for pentavalent + polio

#### VACCINE DOSES NEEDED FOR PROTECTION AGAINST 6 DISEASES


  
**3 doses** of the pentavalent vaccine +  
**3 doses** of the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV)


  
**3 doses** of the hexavalent vaccine

\* Agence de Médecine Préventive (AMP) Afrique, Effective Basic Services Africa (eBASE), Makerere University School of Public Health, Société Malgache de Pédiatrie (SOMAPED), Task Force for Global Health, and WHO Regional Office for Africa (WHO AFRO)

# ROLLOUT TIMELINE

Pentavalent	vs.	Hexavalent
<b>2005</b> WHO/Gavi/UNICEF started supporting transition to penta		<b>2023</b> Gavi started supporting hexa
<b>2018</b> 132 countries including 73 Gavi-supported countries added pentavalent in their national immunization program		<b>2025</b> Currently, 45 primarily high-income countries (EU, Canada, Australia) added it to their national immunization program. Senegal and Mauritania became first Gavi-eligible countries to transition in 2025  Burundi, Madagascar, Liberia, Chad expected to transition in 2026/2027. Many other Gavi-eligible countries (e.g., Rwanda, Togo, Uganda, and Zimbabwe) also considering transition

## What Sabin is Doing

The Sabin Vaccine Institute, in partnership with Gavi and other partners\*, has established the **Hexavalent Vaccine (Switch) Assessment Consortium (HeVAC)** to support countries transitioning to the hexavalent vaccine. The consortium focuses on two core areas:

- **Collecting real-time implementation data**

HeVAC is conducting in-depth evaluations in Mauritania (which introduced hexavalent in July 2025) and Madagascar (planned for January 2026). These studies identify challenges, tracking impacts on coverage, and gathering real-world cost data. Early results expected in 2026 will provide valuable insights for other countries planning their own switch.

- **Facilitating cross-country learning**

Sabin is bringing together health leaders from 32 countries—mainly in the WHO African Region—through virtual peer sessions and an in-person Hexavalent Early Adopters Workshop in Senegal with leaders from 10 African nations. This regional platform connects ministries of health, National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NITAGs), and Expanded Programs on Immunization (EPIs) to promote peer learning and lasting collaboration. While the current focus is on 54 Gavi-supported countries, the initiative is also highly relevant for nearly 80 middle-income countries.

Through HeVAC, Sabin advances evidence-based rollouts, regional peer learning, and insights to guide Gavi's policies and immunization innovation. As convener, Sabin leverages its global experience in partnerships and implementation research to lead this collaborative effort.

## Why This Matters

We are delivering the knowledge and sharing the evidence countries need to confidently introduce hexavalent vaccines — a single shot that protects children against six deadly diseases. By reaching under-immunized communities, this transition not only saves lives but it also eases pressure on health systems, streamlines immunization, and helps countries build immunization programs that are more equitable and efficient.

Learn more on  
**Sabin.org**

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To explore partnership opportunities, contact us at [partnerships@sabin.org](mailto:partnerships@sabin.org).