



BID INITIATIVE

Better data. Better decisions. **Better health.**

SAVING LIVES THROUGH BETTER DATA

Strategies and Tactics from the BID Initiative

Q1 2019

Letter from the Director

The BID Initiative is excited to celebrate a new chapter of our work in 2019! As BID continues working with the governments of Tanzania and Zambia, we're eager to share our learnings with other countries interested in applying similar data quality and use solutions to their own health systems and immunization programs. Beginning last year, BID began pivoting our work to increasingly focus on how other countries may adopt solutions appropriate for their country contexts.

We're excited to announce the launch of a new mentorship program that's working initially with the governments of Uganda, Rwanda, and The Gambia to identify, implement, and scale data quality and use solutions for their immunization programs. You can read more about the mentorship program below.

The knowledge sharing doesn't end there. Health workers are using WhatsApp to exchange advice, questions, and experiences on the [Zambia Electronic Immunization Registry \(ZEIR\)](#). The platform reinforces [BID's change management strategy](#) and empowers health workers, ultimately leading to greater sustainability.

And on a global stage, BID is among several initiatives that contributed to a [synthesis of existing evidence](#) aimed at increasing the use of high-quality data to improve immunization coverage.

Learn more about these and other stories in this issue of the BID newsletter. You can continue to follow our journey by [subscribing to our blog](#) and finding us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Sincerely,

IN THIS ISSUE

[Letter from the Director](#)

[Introducing new regional program, which helps countries embrace data quality and use interventions across Africa](#)

[WhatsApp group gains momentum in Zambia and builds health workers' digital capacity](#)

[On the frontlines of the digital revolution: Tanzania uses artificial intelligence to improve health care](#)

[Want to know what works to improve immunization data? The IDEA review has the answers](#)



The BID Learning Network (BLN) is intended to be a platform where participants can contribute ideas, share experiences and actively participate, helping each



Laurie Werner
Global Director, the BID Initiative
PATH

Si vous désirez recevoir la version française de notre bulletin d'information, veuillez vous [abonner ici](#).

Introducing new regional program, which helps countries embrace data quality and use interventions across Africa



Though the BID Initiative's initial grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has ended, the BID team has always been committed to sharing its learnings from Tanzania and Zambia. The newly launched [regional program](#) is a testament to BID's success in both countries, and to the eagerness of countries across Africa to embrace their own data quality and use interventions.

The [regional program](#) emerged from the need to share experiences, lessons learned, and technical expertise acquired during implementation. It builds on BID's legacy in Tanzania and Zambia over the past five years.

The regional mentorship program will support African countries as they work to select, introduce, and implement digital health and change management interventions to improve their routine immunization programs. It will use existing platforms, such as the BID Learning Network (BLN), to enhance innovation, peer networking, learning, interaction, and knowledge exchange. Last year, countries were invited to apply, and three initial countries were selected based on their readiness to identify and adopt innovative solutions, their government's commitment to the mentorship program, and the degree to which country interest

other as they face similar challenges.

[JUMP IN. GET INVOLVED.](#) →

NOTEWORTHY BLOG POSTS

[Goodbye paper: How Tanzania is leapfrogging the digital divide](#)

[Dr. Francis Dien Mwansa: EPI manager celebrates 'my system' – how country partnerships have defined BID's success](#)

[Matt Berg: The catalytic potential of rapid, iterative software development](#)

NOTEWORTHY RESOURCES

[Redefining vaccination coverage and timeliness measures using electronic immunization registry data in low- and middle-income countries](#)

[BLN Webinar: Introducing the BID Learning Network Data Quality and Use Collaborative](#)

[MMS Bulletin #148: The challenges of implementing a data use culture](#)

Led by PATH in partnership with the governments of Tanzania and Zambia, the BID Initiative is grounded in the belief that better data, plus better decisions, will lead to better health outcomes. Its vision is to empower countries to enhance immunization and overall health service delivery through improved data collection, quality, and use.

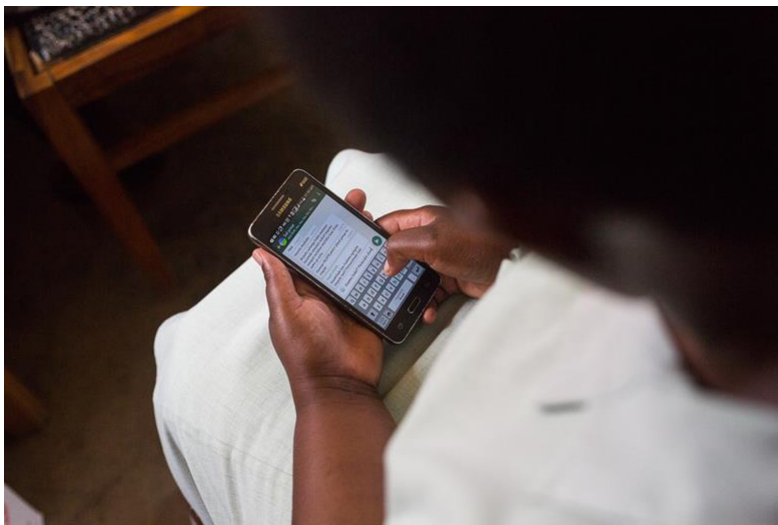
PATH


aligned with the strengths and expertise of mentors, among other selection criteria.

The Gambia, Rwanda, and Uganda are all part of the inaugural mentorship program. Each country has been paired with a team of experts who have direct experience implementing data quality and use interventions. To get involved, and learn more about the mentorship program, visit our [website](#).

*Photos: PATH/Trevor Snapp,
PATH/Trevor Snapp,
PATH/Trevor
Snapp, PATH/Gabe Biencycki.*

WhatsApp group gains momentum in Zambia and builds health workers' digital capacity



How do you synchronize data in the Zambia Electronic Immunization Registry (ZEIR)? How do you register new patients? These are just a few examples of the types of questions posed in a WhatsApp group the BID Initiative is using to support health workers in Zambia.

Even after the successful deployment of data quality and use interventions to 301 facilities across Southern Province, health workers require supportive supervision to continue learning about and sustaining the interventions. WhatsApp offers a platform for peer learning and an opportunity to share solutions to common technical challenges. BID helped identify WhatsApp as a platform for district focal point persons to discuss data use issues and ZEIR. The platform has quickly gained momentum by enabling district staff to communicate and brainstorm about the challenges they face on a daily basis.

Previously, if health workers encountered an issue with ZEIR, they would have to contact the BID team and wait for a response. That interrupted service delivery and jeopardized ZEIR's long-term sustainability in Zambia.

Now, in addition to WhatsApp, district focal persons have been assigned to provide technical support to facilities. Health workers

are encouraged to contact them to troubleshoot challenges and minimize disruption.

Health workers, for instance, may send screenshots to troubleshoot system errors. By crowdsourcing responses, solutions come more quickly, and health workers feel empowered and responsible for the success of interventions.

Health workers also use them to raise awareness about upcoming events, trainings, or meetings, among other opportunities. They demonstrate the growing leadership of Zambia's health workforce as it embraces and champions digital solutions.

On the frontlines of the digital revolution: Tanzania uses artificial intelligence to improve health care



In Tanzania and Zambia, electronic immunization registries are already improving nurse workloads and patient care. But the implications for individual-level patient data stretch far beyond day-to-day decision-making.

The BID Initiative is working with **macro-eyes**, a Seattle-based machine learning company increasing access to health care by analyzing Tanzania's and Zambia's vaccine data sets. In 2017, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awarded macro-eyes funding to design and test a predictive supply chain for vaccines, while working in close partnership with the BID teams and the Government of Tanzania.

Machine learning, the computation underpinning artificial intelligence, delivers effective web searches, automated translation, self-driving cars, and can help to detect financial fraud. But what does it entail? It is the science of teaching suites of algorithms to identify and learn from meaningful patterns in data. Using data from the Tanzania Immunization Registry (TImR) and more than 700 health facilities and 500,000 patients, macro-eyes is able to use artificial intelligence technology to predict

vaccine consumption—weeks and months into the future. This has incredible implications for cost savings, resource efficiency, and immunization coverage.

Based on initial results, the macro-eyes machine learning outperforms the best available models for vaccine forecasting by more than 70 percent. The potential for this technology can't be understated. Health workers across all levels are empowered to plan and project supplies needs and reduce vaccines wastage rates. As a result, caregivers are less likely to be turned away from a facility because of vaccine stockouts.

To learn more about macro-eyes and their work in Tanzania, read the [blog](#).

Want to know what works to improve immunization data? The IDEA review has the answers



High-quality data is a cornerstone of well-functioning immunization programs. When it's available, public health decision-makers, including funders, policymakers, and program implementers, can understand which populations are underserved and where resources can be allocated most effectively. Immunization coverage rates have improved in recent years, but there are still gaps in care.

To reach every last child with vaccines, countries, decision-makers, and health workers need access to high-quality data that is accurate and translatable into meaningful information. Initiatives like BID have implemented digital solutions with great success, but until recently there has not been clear guidance, based on a systematic review of the evidence, about where, how, and when to implement these solutions.

The [Immunization Data: Evidence for Action \(IDEA\)](#) project is a direct response to this need. Led by PATH and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the project was launched to help

identify best practices for key stakeholders in the immunization sector and to determine why these interventions work.

The IDEA review was released in early 2019 and provides strategies that have been shown to improve the quality and use of data in immunization, including practical ways to act on these findings.

Top findings range from the importance of interconnected data quality and use strategies to the need to institutionalize data use to produce long-term success. The IDEA report hopes to help stakeholders improve immunization outcomes around the world. For more information and the full report, visit the findyourfinding.org website.

The BID Initiative c/o PATH

Mail: PO Box 900922 | Seattle, WA 98109 USA

Street: 2201 Westlake Avenue, Suite 200 | Seattle, WA 98121 USA

Tel: 206.285.3500 | Fax: 206.285.6619

BIDInitiative@path.org

SHARE:  LIKE  TWEET

[Click here to send this to a colleague.](#)

Received this from a friend? [Click here to subscribe.](#)

You are subscribed as [email address suppressed]. [Click here to unsubscribe.](#)

We respect the privacy of our online relationships. Our lists are never sold to third parties. We will only share personally identifiable information with third parties when the person submitting the information authorizes us to share it or we are required to by law.