EVALUATION BRIEF
PLSHL 2 VACCINATOR STUDY

GALVmed
Protecting Livestock – Improving Human Lives

This evaluation brief provides a summary of the findings and conclusions of the PLSHL 2 Vaccinator Study. For more information please email m.e@galvmed.org.

ABOUT PLSHL 2

The **Protecting Livestock, Saving Human Life 2 (PLSHL 2) project** (April 2012 - March 2018) was a significant $50 million initiative jointly funded by the Gates Foundation and the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The project's core objective was to improve the ability of small-scale livestock producers (SSPs) in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia to protect their livestock and poultry against disease. PLSHL 2 pursued two primary activities to accomplish its overarching goal:

- **Product Development**: This involved the creation of new products, primarily vaccines, targeting significant livestock diseases where existing solutions were absent or lacking.
- **Market Development**: The project focused on establishing new or improved market mechanisms to facilitate the widespread distribution and sale of existing animal health products tailored for SSP.

The PLSHL 2 initiative was a landmark project for GALVmed in that it was the first time that a large vaccine manufacturer was partnered in a market development initiative. The approach was simple; introduce the manufacturer to a new, unserved market segment (very small-scale poultry farmers) and thereby grow their vaccine sales while improving poultry production for some of the poorest and most vulnerable farmers in India. Over a two-year period, approximately **129 million doses of poultry and other vaccines were sold to a cumulative total of approximately 3.9 million small-scale farmers** in Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand States. The project was a successful business venture for the vaccine manufacturer and a valuable learning experience for GALVmed.

High rates of vaccine adoption (above 80%) were obtained quickly and remained fairly stable across locations throughout the project.

Community vaccinators played a critical role in the project. They were responsible for delivery of vaccines at scale (each vaccinator delivered thousands of doses to hundreds of SSPs), for overcoming the logistical challenges of collection, correct storage and 'last mile' delivery in rural areas, and for the safe and effective vaccination of animals. SSPs were charged a fee to cover the cost of vaccine and an administration cost, making this a viable business. The community vaccinators were identified and trained in collaboration with local organisations and NGOS who offered extensive in-field resources and a vast network within the SSP community. By leveraging this local presence and expertise, the initiative was able to facilitate effective community engagement, vaccine distribution and uptake among this segment.

The success of this model of implementation is evident in the **182 million of vaccine doses sold under the PLSHL 2 initiative and the substantial** economic benefits to SSPs derived from these sales.

ABOUT THE VACCINATOR STUDY

Purpose: To assess the viability of the PLSHL 2 project community vaccinators 6 years post project closure.

Methodology: Convenience sampling of previous PLSHL 2 vaccinators.

GALVmed function: Monitoring & Evaluation.

Dates: June-July 2023.

Location: Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha, India.

Consultant study lead: Dr Mamta Dhawan.

Local implementing partner: Asplor Research Private Limited.

While the initiative demonstrated benefits for SSPs throughout its duration, the long-term sustainability of this model remains uncertain. Critical questions persist: Do community vaccinators continue their vaccination activities once the project concludes? Do they continue to achieve profitability, thereby maintaining the viability of this business model independently? This study aimed to address these questions by **evaluating the sustainability of the community vaccinator model six years post the end of the PLSHL 2 project.**

By examining the continued engagement of vaccinators in their roles and their ability to generate profit, the study sought to determine whether this model can be a self-sustaining enterprise that contributes to animal health and local economies in the long term.

The community vaccinator follow-up study was carried out in India, where GALVmed collaborated with a large-scale manufacturer and several NGOs in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha to improve SSPs' access to livestock and poultry vaccines via community vaccinators during the PLSHL 2 initiative. This strategic collaboration with a local organisation offered extensive in-field resources and a vast network within the SSP community to facilitate vaccine adoption.

During the initiative, a total of **1,927 vaccinators were trained**, and in 2023, a **follow-up survey was conducted to interview these vaccinators to determine whether their businesses were continuing and to understand their experiences** with vaccinating after the end of the PLSHL 2 project.

- A total of 305 (16%) vaccinators participated in the telephone interview.
- Among the 305 respondents, the majority (77%) were male and had been educated to middle school level (73%).
- A small majority of vaccinators (57%) owned their own chickens, and nearly all of these vaccinators (97%) vaccinated their own birds.
- The majority of respondents were from Odisha (44%), followed by Jharkhand (29%) and Chhattisgarh (27%).

KEY FINDINGS

- **Sustainable and Profitable Model**: For motivated vaccinators, village vaccination proves to be a sustainable and profitable business model. It generates revenue for the vaccinators and benefits the farms receiving the vaccines. The sample of respondents was predominantly male and, therefore, the number of successful vaccinators was likewise predominantly male.
- **Continued Engagement**: As of July 2023, 58% of respondents were still working as community vaccinators in communities. Among these, 92% consider vaccinating as a reliable source of income and plan to continue in this role. Thus, six years after the formal end of the PLSHL 2 programme, this remains a viable business model for sustained income, although only 30% cited vaccinating as their principal source of household income.
- **Impact of Vaccinator Training**: Of those planning to continue as vaccinators, 47% were newly trained under PLSHL 2 and were not working as vaccinators prior to PLSHL 2, indicating that the PLSHL 2 training has provided long-term capacity.
- **Gender Implications**: Whilst 23% of respondents overall were female, only 17% of those planning to continue vaccinating were female. GALVmed's Vaccinator Performance Report: India and Nepal captures some reasons why female vaccinators face more hurdles than men.
- **Vaccine Specialisation**: Vaccinators typically specialise in a single vaccine (mean 1.1 vaccine products per vaccinator), with thermo-tolerant La Sota being the most popular (32% of respondents). Other vaccines used include PPR 24%, Gumboro 16% and R2B (ND) 15%, showing that vaccinators have been able to diversify beyond ND vaccines to include vaccines for goats.
- **Vaccine Administration Rates**: The number of doses administered annually depends on the vaccine type. Vaccinators focusing solely on thermo-tolerant La Sota, typically targeting smaller flocks of scavenging chickens, sell a median of 550 doses per year. Those dealing with PPR administer 600 doses per year, while those specialising in R2B, targeted towards larger farms, administer a median of 10,000 doses per year.
- **Critical Roles of Transport and SSP Sensitisation**: Access to transport, typically by motorcycle (65%), and conducting village level sensitisation (65%) are critical to vaccinators' business. Vaccinating is an active role, requiring vaccinators to reach out to SSPs rather than waiting for SSPs to come to them.
- **Perceived Growth in Flock Sizes**: A further positive observation is around vaccinator perceptions of the expansion of flock sizes since they started vaccinating. According to vaccinators, 38% of flocks had more than 250 birds when they started vaccinating compared to approximately 51% in 2023.
- **Challenges and Barriers**: Despite the success, challenges remain. Among those who dropped out, poor revenues from vaccinating were cited as a key reason. Among those continuing, 54% cited vaccine shortages as a barrier, 36% cited the cost of the product, and 28% had safety concerns. Therefore, cost and distribution remain critical issues affecting the longevity of community vaccination.

CONCLUSION

Six years post-initiative, nearly 60% of the vaccinators continue to actively administer vaccinations, contributing significantly to their household income. Additionally, post-initiative sales data shows a substantial increase in revenue and doses delivered, indicating the initiative's catalytic effect in empowering a large vaccine manufacturer to strategically position its product portfolio to meet the growing demand within the SSP market.

The sustainability and scalability of projects, as demonstrated by post-project sales growth and continued community engagement, highlight GALVmed's post-funding impact and role in catalysing long-term systemic changes.

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Study limitations: *A significant limitation of the study is the reliance on telephonic surveys, as not all intended participants may have answered the calls due to connectivity issues or availability. This non-response bias could skew the results, potentially affecting the generalisability of the study's findings.*

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