

SECURE Webinar #11
Strengthening Domestic Vaccine Development and Manufacturing in Viet Nam
29 February 2024, 2:00-3:00 PM Manila time

CONCEPT NOTE

The COVID-19 pandemic served as a wake-up call for many upper-middle-income country (UMIC) and low-and-middle income country (LMIC) governments. Despite unprecedented global mobilization of resources, early access to COVID-19 vaccines for the UMICs and LMICs was seriously inadequate, in part due to concentration of the COVID-19 vaccine R&D and manufacturing by vaccine companies in, and significant upfront purchasing of the COVID-19 vaccines by, the high-income countries (HICs). It was further compounded by the widespread prevalence of “vaccine nationalism” with vaccine producing countries restricting the export of vaccines until they have ensured they have enough doses for their own populations. The possibility of similar vaccine shortages in future pandemics and the existence of diseases of regional importance without efficient vaccines has alerted countries to the compelling need for expanding their own vaccine-manufacturing capacity and capabilities in order to strengthen pandemic preparedness, to improve vaccine-supply security, and to sustainably tackle endemic diseases. Viet Nam is not an exception and the national government recently signed multiple decisions to introduce new vaccines and further improve the domestic supply of vaccines. By 2030, the country will introduce and scale up Rota, PCV, HPV and Seasonal Influenza vaccines as part of its national expanded immunization program (EPI); and plans to master production technology for fifteen vaccines and be able to produce five vaccines at international-standards, including the pentavalent vaccine which is currently the only vaccine that’s imported by the national EPI.

Viet Nam has an established domestic vaccine industry fulfilling most of the needs of its current national expanded immunization program. The four state-owned vaccine manufacturers are IVAC, POLYVAC, VABIOTECH, and DAVAC. Each of the enterprises are parastatal, with 50% publicly traded stocks/shares, with the government retaining at least 50% ownership. However, the vaccine R&D by the local industry is rooted in traditional technologies of live-attenuated and killed or inactivated vaccine platforms and lacks the capacity, resources and an enabling environment to develop the capacity to develop and produce new vaccines on modern (e.g., recombinant protein) and novel platforms (e.g., mRNA and viral vector) for emerging, endemic and potentially pandemic diseases. Viet Nam also has transitioned out of the routine Gavi support in 2021 which means that the government needs to fully finance the procurement of all new planned vaccines, including PCV and HPV vaccines that are not domestically produced, under the national immunization program in the coming years.

Viet Nam’s domestic vaccine industry seeks financing and capacity to expand its technological capabilities and product portfolio to meet the emerging needs of national EPI as well as meet any potential post-COVID-19 health security threats. Key questions in this regard are:

- (i) what is the economic viability of the existing vaccine portfolio of Vietnamese manufacturers for overseas markets?
- (ii) how can the manufacturers strategically identify such vaccine products for exports?
- (iii) what additional capabilities do the manufacturers need to develop in the long-term to meet upcoming domestic priorities and be self-reliant for any post-COVID-19 health security threat? and
- (iv) what other enabling factors are critical for the sustainability of Viet Nam's domestic vaccine industry?

The SECURE Webinar Series is a platform to promote innovative approaches and best practices for COVID-19 vaccination programs among Southeast Asia (SEA) developing member countries (DMCs) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The webinar series is supported by the ongoing ADB technical assistance (TA) on Supporting Enhanced COVID-19 Vaccination and Post COVID-19 Health Security Response in SEA, and it serves as a venue for knowledge and information exchange among governments, the private sector, development partners, CSO networks and other key stakeholders. The SECURE webinar 11 presents a strategic framework for the prioritization of investments and efforts to strengthen the domestic vaccine industry in Viet Nam. Countries with vaccine producing capabilities may find the analysis highly relevant to the strengthening of their own vaccine production capabilities. ASEAN countries with an interest in the regional level procurement of vaccines for their national EPI programs in the future may also find it knowledgeable to learn about the existing capabilities of Viet Nam Vaccine Manufacturers.

AGENDA

Moderator: Mr. Randy Dacanay, Senior TA Coordinator, TA 6767

Time	Session
2:00-2:05 pm	<p>Welcome Remarks</p> <p><i>Mr. Randy Dacanay, Senior TA Coordinator, TA 6767 ADB</i></p>
2:05-2:15 pm	<p>Overview and National-level Plans on New Vaccines Introduction and Domestic Vaccine Manufacturing in Viet Nam</p> <p><i>Mr. Aman Singh Vaccine Financing Specialist, Consultant, ADB</i></p>
2:15-2:25 pm	<p>Local Capacity for Vaccine Development and Manufacturing in Viet Nam</p> <p><i>Dr. Do Tuan Dat President, Vabiotech, Viet Nam</i></p>
2:25-2:40 pm	<p>Strategic Directions for the Strengthening of Viet Nam's Vaccine Development and Manufacturing</p> <p><i>Mr. Aman Singh Vaccine Financing Specialist, Consultant, ADB</i></p>
2:40-2:55 pm	<p>Q&A</p>
2:55-3:00 pm	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <p><i>Dr. Eduardo Banzon Principal Health Specialist Human and Social Development Sector Office Sectors Group ADB</i></p>