Executive Summary

To achieve their immunization goals, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) needed to reach vaccinators—especially those in remote areas—with essential immunization training. Immunization Academy developed a custom, interactive Android app for DRC, called **IA Learn**, which allowed DRC to reach and train vaccinators even in the hardest-to-reach areas.

The Acasus team in DRC led stakeholder engagement, in-country implementation, and provided technical program guidance.

This case study details the rationale, approach, and impact of the IA Learn app in DRC.

The Challenge

Children and vaccinators are hard-to-reach

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The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has one of the highest rates of child mortality in the world. In 2017, only 1 in 3 children were fully vaccinated. And **1 in 5 children did not receive any vaccines at all.**

It is incredibly challenging to provide immunization services to children because DRC has one of the lowest population densities in the world. It is the second largest country in Africa, but it ranks 196th worldwide in population density. Half of DRC's under-immunized children live in remote, hard-to-reach villages. Some villages are days away from the closest health center. In those health centers, there are typically not enough health workers and high staff turnover. There is a near-constant need to train new staff.

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The Solution

Strengthen planning, monitoring, and health worker capacity

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The Ministry of Health developed a strategy to address low vaccination coverage and vaccinator capacity. Acasus and Immunization Academy supported the Ministry to implement three strategic objectives.

1 Facilitate planning of fixed and outreach vaccination sessions so vaccines could reach the hardest-to-reach.

2 Establish a system for monitoring vaccination sessions so all stakeholders could have accurate data for action.

3 Build the skills of vaccinators so they could perform all essential and foundational skills—everything from planning to vaccine delivery and community engagement.

In this case study, we will focus on the third objective and how DRC improved the capacity of **2,200 vaccinators working in 732 health facilities in two provinces**, Haut-Lomami and Tanganyika, using the IA Learn app.

What we did:
Develop and deploy mobile training

To achieve their immunization goals, DRC needed to reach vaccinators—especially those in remote areas—with essential immunization training. Immunization Academy developed a custom, interactive Android app for DRC, called IA Learn.

The IA Learn app could be used online or offline and contained short, how-to video lessons with tests after each lesson to reinforce learning. The 52-lesson training curriculum was developed with Acasus and DRC's EPI team to target all of the essential skills needed for a vaccinator to do their job. Each health facility received an Android device with the IA Learn app pre-loaded and were encouraged to watch at least one video lesson each week all together as a health facility team.
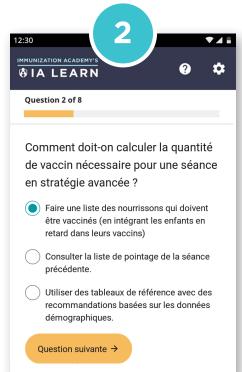
The learning experience

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Acasus

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IA LEARN

Thématique 1: Conduire une séance de vaccination

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Visionner la prochaine leçon

Que faut-il emporter pour une séance de vaccination?

First, vaccinators watched a short video lesson.

2

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IMMUNIZATION ACADEMY'S
IA LEARN

Question 2 of 8

Comment doit-on calculer la quantité de vaccin nécessaire pour une séance en stratégie avancée ?

- ⦿ Faire une liste des nourrissons qui doivent être vaccinés (en intégrant les enfants en retard dans leurs vaccins)
- ○ Consulter la liste de pointage de la séance précédente.
- ○ Utiliser des tableaux de référence avec des recommandations basées sur les données démographiques.

Question suivante →

Next, vaccinators took a short, skills-based test to demonstrate proficiency and reinforce learning.

3

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Votre progression

⚙ **Thématique 1: Conduire une séance de vaccination**

★ Que faut-il emporter pour une séance de vaccination?

★ Préparation de l'espace de travail d'une séance de vaccination

★ Comment évaluer l'admissibilité à la vaccination d'un enfant

⋯ Que faut-il dire aux parentes pendant une vaccination ?

⋯ Comment positionner les nourrissons et les enfants pour les vacciner

At any point, vaccinators could go back and watch a video lesson again for an on-the-job reference.

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CERTIFICAT

Félicitations pour avoir terminé le programme de formation «Les Essentiels du PEV».

Elisabeth Mukamba Musenga
Médecin Directeur du PEV

Alice Bumgarner
Managing Director, Immunization Academy

After passing all of the tests, vaccinators earned a certificate to acknowledge their accomplishment.

Manager support tools

A real-time dashboard enabled managers to monitor the progress of each health facility.

The dashboard flagged any areas of weakness so that managers could target their supportive supervision to the health facilities with the greatest need.

The Results

Most learners kept pace with learning and by the end of the project year...

93%

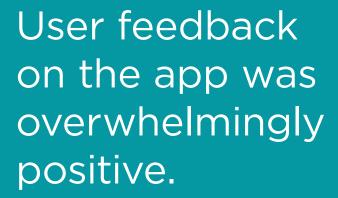of vaccinators had engaged in the training

53%

of vaccinators completed the training in less than 4 months

User feedback on the app was overwhelmingly positive.

74% of vaccinators found the app training to be "very useful."

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We don't need to wait a month for a supervisor to come from Kinshasa and teach us something. We can teach and learn ourselves.

-HEALTH WORKER IN DRC

Impact

With self-paced video lessons that were available offline, **the IA Learn app made it easy and effective** for DRC to reach their hardest-to-reach vaccinators in Haut-Lomami and Tanganyika with the training they needed to measurably improve skills and performance.

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It had been observed that a number of providers in the field were in enormous need of training, but the cost of face-to-face training was very high. So, with this project, we developed 52 training videos for providers...Each time they get together to watch, they strengthen their capacities. The cost is really reduced, which has allowed us to improve the practices of all providers who administer vaccines.

-NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF EPI

Contact Us

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Interested in learning how the IA Learn app could help you build capacity and improve performance?

Contact:

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