

## Vaccine Hesitancy Assessment in Nigeria

The COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy Assessment in Nigeria Study was designed to generate evidence to inform policymakers' decisions to upscale and deploy COVID-19 and other routine vaccination campaigns in the country. The C-19 VHAN study is a spin-off of PSHAN's Alliance for Epidemic Preparedness and Response (A4EPR) project targeted at strengthening epidemic response in Nigeria and is sponsored by Sanofi.

It has been established that vaccines are effective and reliable public health interventions against viral outbreaks and pandemics. The largest, single factor which prevents Nigeria from recording optimal vaccination rates is vaccine hesitancy. Vaccine hesitancy refers to delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite availability of vaccine services.<sup>1</sup> It is currently estimated that four out of ten Nigerians are unwilling to take the COVID-19 vaccine. Because vaccine hesitancy is driven by context specific factors, it is important that these factors are understood and accounted for within risk communication interventions. Due to competing priorities and the urgency of addressing the pandemic, it became imperative, to design this project aimed at strengthening vaccination programs.

The Study is being implemented in Lagos, Kano and the FCT and is due to be completed in March 2023. Key output from the study will be:

1. A Report containing key findings and recommendations
2. a pilot community awareness and sensitization campaign with the aim of improving the uptake of COVID-19 vaccination and other routine immunization
3. Policy Dialogue Workshop involving a wide array of stakeholders to translate evidence to action.

## Shaping Equitable Market Access (SEMA) for Reproductive Health

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) products – including contraceptives, medicines to manage pregnancy-related complications – can dramatically improve people's health and well-being by reducing and maternal deaths. When women and girls can access quality SRH products, they are more likely to stay in school, join the workforce, and help bolster their livelihoods and broader economies – key components to achieving a gender-equal world.

However, persistent weaknesses in SRH markets (e.g high prices, insufficient supply, inequitable access) prevent millions of people from being able to access comprehensive, quality and affordable SRH products that fit their preferences. To address this, the Shaping Equitable Market Access (SEMA) for Reproductive Health was born.

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<sup>1</sup> MacDonald, N. E., & SAGE Working Group on Vaccine Hesitancy (2015). Vaccine hesitancy: Definition, scope, and determinants. *Vaccine*, 33(34), 4161–4164. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2015.04.036>

SEMA is a new, innovative partnership that aims to transform sexual and reproductive health (SRH) markets so that people everywhere have sustained access to comprehensive, quality, and affordable SRH products.

In Nigeria, the SEMA Project is executed by the Private Health Sector Alliance of Nigeria (PSHAN), in consortium with PharmAccess Foundation and Halcyon Consulting. Since August 200, the Consortium has been working to:

- Gather evidence and provide critical insights to the SRH market landscape
- Support engagement with local stakeholders to align on priority SRH market problems and identify opportunities for how SEMA might invest to tackle local market priorities
- Engage members of the RH TWG and other local partners to expand understanding of how to shape health markets in Nigeria.