



# VIMC NEWSLETTER

**June 2025**

## VIMC CONSORTIUM-WIDE MEETING 2025, ACCRA, 10-12 JUNE

→ Highlights from the VIMC Consortium-wide meeting held in Accra, Ghana from 10-12 June 2025 available on **Pages 2-6**.

## NEW RESEARCH: STUDY CO-LED BY XIAOZHEN LAI

A recent publication co-led by a VIMC affiliate highlights new findings in vaccine impact modelling. See **Page 7**.

## AFFILIATE UPDATE: MEET VIMC'S NEWEST MEMBERS

→ An introduction to the latest affiliates joining the consortium, supporting our goal to grow a diverse, international modelling community. See **Pages 10-11**.

## TECH UPDATE: REPORTING PORTAL UPGRADE

An upcoming overhaul of the VIMC Reporting Portal is in progress. See **Page 9**.

## WORKSHOP REPORT: YELLOW FEVER MODELLING IN BRAZIL

A recent VIMC workshop held in Rio de Janeiro focused on advancing yellow fever models to support climate-informed public health policy. See **Page 9**.

## SPOTLIGHT: VIMC IN SCIENCE IN CONTEXT

Dr Katy Gaythorpe discusses VIMC's impact and approach in a recent video interview. See **Page 12**.

## PANEL EVENT: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN WEST AFRICA

→ A summary of the panel chaired during the Accra meeting, exploring public health challenges and opportunities in the region, is available on **Page 7**.

## POLICY UPDATE: GATES FOUNDATION OPEN ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

An overview of the Gates Foundation's updated Open Access policy—now in effect and applicable to all VIMC-funded research—is on **Page 8**.

## CALL FOR PARTICIPATION: STUDY ON MODELLING AND POLICY IMPACT

VIMC members are invited to join a WHO-led study on modelling and decision-making. See **Page 13**.

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITY: VACCINOLOGY COURSE & SYMPOSIUM

Upcoming short course and symposium in Japan. See **Page 13**.



# VIMC CONSORTIUM-WIDE MEETING 2025


**ACCRA, GHANA**  
**10-12 JUNE 2025**


## VIMC CONSORTIUM-WIDE MEETING 2025 HELD IN ACCRA, GHANA


The Vaccine Impact Modelling Consortium (VIMC) held its **2025 consortium-wide meeting** from **10–12 June in Accra, Ghana**—the first time the meeting has been hosted on the African continent. The event brought together **members, affiliates, funders, and collaborators** from around the globe to reflect on progress, strengthen connections, and shape the future direction of VIMC's work under the umbrella of "VIMC 2.0."


### FORWARD-THINKING WORKSTREAMS TO MEET EVOLVING NEEDS

A central theme of the meeting was the launch and expansion of several new workstreams that will shape the consortium's direction in the years ahead. These initiatives reflect VIMC's commitment to providing high-quality evidence that meets evolving global health needs:

 **Expanding Outbreak Vaccine Response Impact Framework** will enhance VIMC's ability to support emergency decision-making in rapidly evolving public health crises.

 **Vaccine Prioritisation and Greater Use of Country Impact Estimates** aims to generate tailored impact estimates to support national policymakers.

 **Supporting Health Economic Modelling** will integrate cost-effectiveness perspectives into VIMC's work to strengthen the case for vaccine investment.

 **Impact of Catch-Up Vaccination** efforts focuses on evaluating the benefits of restoring immunisation coverage and addressing gaps caused by disruptions in routine services.

These initiatives demonstrate a growing commitment to policy relevance, stakeholder alignment, and flexible, context-sensitive modelling approaches.

### BROADER DISCUSSIONS AND SHARED LEARNING

Beyond the introduction of new workstreams, the meeting included a wide range of updates from all Project Working Groups (PWGs), offering valuable insight into the current focus and progress of disease-specific modelling across the consortium. Updates were shared on analytics platforms and collaborative hubs.





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Discussions also touched on strategic priorities from funding partners, including presentations from Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the Gates Foundation, highlighting how VIMC's work aligns with and informs their goals.

Stakeholder engagement featured prominently, with **panels and roundtable discussions exploring how VIMC can build stronger, more effective connections with public health agencies and local decision-makers.** The value of in-person collaboration was particularly evident in networking sessions, affiliate spotlights, and informal exchanges throughout the three days.

## STRENGTHENING REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Hosting the meeting in Ghana provided a valuable opportunity to centre regional expertise and dialogue. Local voices contributed meaningfully to conversations about vaccine impact, health system challenges, and the role of modelling in national decision-making. This context-rich engagement underscored the importance of ensuring VIMC's work remains grounded in local realities while maintaining its global relevance.

## LOOKING AHEAD...

The consortium continues to grow in both scope and ambition. To build on the momentum of this meeting, we would be very grateful if you could take 10-15 minutes to complete a short feedback form on your experience of the meeting.

Your feedback will help us assess what worked well, identify areas for improvement, and shape future activities to better support our collective goals.

👉 Please take a few minutes to complete our short **feedback form**

Thank you to everyone who joined us in Accra, and to all who continue to contribute to the consortium's mission! Please enjoy the lovely pictures!





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# SHAPING THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN WEST AFRICA: PANEL EVENT

ACCRA, GHANA  
11 JUNE 2025

## SPOTLIGHT ON PUBLIC HEALTH IN WEST AFRICA

As part of the week's activities in Accra, a panel event titled "**Shaping the Future of Public Health in West Africa: Innovation, Demographics and the Data Revolution**" took place on **Wednesday 11 June**.

Chaired by **Professor Neil Ferguson**, the session explored how data, technology, and demographic insights can inform stronger, more resilient health systems across the region.

In connection with the event, Professor Ferguson, along with **Dr. Frances Baaba da-Costa Vroom**, a **Senior Lecturer at the University of Ghana's School of Public Health**, also spoke with local media about the challenges and opportunities facing public health in Ghana and beyond.

The interviews were featured in several national outlets, helping to highlight the relevance of VIMC's work in the wider public discourse:

 **Bullet TV: [Shaping the Future of Public Health in West Africa](#)**

 **Ghanaian Chronicle: [Investment in Health Sector Key to Combating Non-Communicable Diseases – Imperial Scholar](#)**




## NEW PUBLICATION CO-LED BY VIMC AFFILIATE XIAOZHEN LAI

A new study co-led by **VIMC affiliate Dr Xiaozhen Lai** evaluates the **health and economic impact of China's Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) from 1974 to 2024**.

The study estimates that the programme **averted 2.5 million deaths** and achieved a benefit-cost ratio of 20 from a societal perspective, highlighting major contributions to public health in China and globally.

You can read the full paper here:

 [Health impact and economic evaluation of the Expanded Program on Immunization in China from 1974 to 2024: a modelling study](#)





# **POLICY UPDATE: GATES FOUNDATION'S 2025 OPEN ACCESS REQUIREMENTS NOW IN EFFECT**



## **Policy Update: Gates Foundation's 2025 Open Access Requirements Now in Effect**

The Gates Foundation has implemented significant updates to its Open Access policy, effective 1 January 2025. These changes affect all research funded, in whole or in part, by the Foundation—including work carried out by members of the Vaccine Impact Modelling Consortium (VIMC).

*Note: While the VIMC receives funding from multiple sources, including Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and Wellcome, this update pertains specifically to the Gates Foundation's Open Access policy.*

The updated policy is designed to maximise the accessibility and impact of Gates-funded research by removing barriers to sharing and reuse. It reflects a shift away from the traditional journal publishing model and focuses on fast, fair, and open dissemination.

### **Summary of Key Changes**

#### **Preprints Now Required**

All Funded Manuscripts must be made publicly available as a preprint on a **recognised server** (e.g. [VeriXiv](#), [bioRxiv](#)) prior to journal submission, unless there are ethical, safety, or other legitimate concerns. VeriXiv is recommended due to its grant verification processes.

#### **No Coverage of Article Processing Charges (APCs)**

From 1 January 2025, the Foundation will no longer pay publication fees. Authors publishing in journals that charge APCs will need to seek alternative funding or consider publishing in no-cost, open access journals. Options include:

- Institutional publisher agreements
- Use of other funding sources
- Publisher waivers (especially for LMIC institutions)
- APC-free journals (see the Directory of Open Access Journals, DOAJ)
- Gates' partnership with PLOS, which remains in place

#### **Immediate and Open Access Licensing**

All outputs must be shared immediately upon publication and licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International ([CC BY 4.0](#)) or an equivalent licence. This enables anyone to reuse and build upon the work without restrictions.

#### **Copyright Retention**

Grantees are expected to retain sufficient copyright to ensure their work can be deposited in open repositories and shared under a CC BY licence.

#### **Mandatory Data Sharing**

All Funded Manuscripts must include an Underlying Data Availability Statement and make relevant datasets available as soon as possible, in accordance with legal and ethical standards. Researchers are encouraged to adhere to FAIR data principles to support transparency and reuse.

#### **Repository Deposits Required**

Once accepted for publication, manuscripts must be deposited in **PubMed Central (PMC)** or another recognised open-access repository, with appropriate metadata to indicate Gates funding.

#### **Policy Applies to All Grants Since 2015**

Although the updated policy came into effect in 2025, it applies to all grants awarded since 1 January 2015.

#### **Compliance Is a Funding Requirement**

Adherence to the new Open Access policy is mandatory. Manuscripts and data that do not meet the new standards will be considered non-compliant.

#### **What This Means for the Consortium**

As a consortium funded by the Gates Foundation, VIMC researchers are expected to comply fully with the updated policy. This includes prompt preprint posting, the use of appropriate licensing, and making all underlying data openly available.

The Foundation's emphasis is on open, rapid dissemination that maximises the reach and impact of the research it supports.

While the removal of APC support may require some adjustments, the overall intent is to promote fairness and remove financial barriers to publishing—particularly for researchers based in low- and middle-income countries.

In parallel, the Foundation is redirecting funds to support new, sustainable Open Access business models and infrastructure that aim to create a more equitable publishing environment for all researchers.

#### **Next Steps**

All VIMC members are encouraged to review their publication plans to ensure alignment with the policy. Manuscripts should include the following standard acknowledgement:

*"This work was supported, in whole or in part, by the Gates Foundation [Grant Number INV-034281], previously (OPP1157270 / INV-009125) and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. . The conclusions and opinions expressed in this work are those of the author(s) alone and shall not be attributed to the Foundation. Under the grant conditions of the Foundation, a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License has already been assigned to the Author Accepted Manuscript version that might arise from this submission. Please note works submitted as a preprint have not undergone a peer review process."*

For more information, please refer to the [Gates Foundation Open Access policy](#).

Questions can be directed to the Foundation's Open Access team via [openaccess@gatesfoundation.org](mailto:openaccess@gatesfoundation.org), or to the VIMC Secretariat via [vimc@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:vimc@imperial.ac.uk).



# BRAZIL WORKSHOP ADVANCES YELLOW FEVER MODELLING FOR POLICY IMPACT

Report by Katy Gaythorpe, Keith Fraser, and Sally Jahn

As part of our Wellcome-funded programme on climate-sensitive infectious disease modelling, the VIMC Climate Change workstream recently convened a focused workshop on yellow fever in Brazil.

We held a workshop focused on yellow fever modelling in Brazil as part of the VIMC's Wellcome-funded programme on Climate Change. The **"International Workshop on Yellow Fever Modelling in Brazil to Address Challenges and Scientific Advancements in the Context of Climate Change"** took place from **5–8 May 2025** at Fiocruz in **Rio de Janeiro**.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- i) present current mathematical models of yellow fever transmission,
- ii) identify gaps in knowledge to prioritise issues that compromise the applicability of models, and
- iii) identify and develop strategies for obtaining data that can be used for the necessary advances in public policies for the prevention and control of yellow fever.

The workshop brought together **researchers specialising in disease transmission dynamics** from Brazilian research institutions and reference organisations, such as the **Ministry of Health**, as well as international experts from **Imperial College London**, creating an environment conducive to knowledge exchange and the **enhancement of modelling methodologies**.





## MEET VIMC'S LATEST AFFILIATES

- ➔ Palwashi Anwari
- ➔ Arani B. Bosire
- ➔ Stanley Sayianka

Our affiliate scheme aligns with our goals to foster a diverse international community of vaccine impact modellers, and to provide training in infectious disease modelling.

Affiliates benefit from opportunities to participate in webinars, submit abstracts for VIMC-wide meetings, and opportunities to be paired with another affiliate as a 'buddy'.

**Apply to become a VIMC affiliate [here](#).**

### VIMC affiliate scheme - application form

This form should be completed by the person applying to become an affiliate of [VIMC](#), with input from the VIMC member who is nominating them (where applicable).

Affiliates should already have some link to VIMC and its work, and some experience of modelling. For example, they may have attended a VIMC short course, they may be PhD students or close collaborators of existing VIMC members, or they may have taken part in the VIMC fellowship scheme. Affiliates may be based in any country. In general, we expect affiliates to be based at a university, research institute, or global health organisation.

We will evaluate applications monthly on a rolling basis. The affiliate scheme will stay open throughout VIMC 2.0, so there is no application deadline.

VIMC may share the answers provided with other affiliates, VIMC members, and other key partners. (If there is specific information you prefer not to be shared, you can state this in the final section of this form.)

## HOW DID YOU GET STARTED WORKING IN MATHEMATICAL MODELLING / EPIDEMIOLOGY?

During my Master's in Epidemiology and Biostatistics in the U.S., I discovered a deep interest in data-driven approaches to health. Upon returning to Afghanistan, I became involved in evaluations and surveys and later joined the National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NITAG), where I was introduced to economic evaluations using modelling. This experience inspired my doctoral research, which focused on the cost-effectiveness of rotavirus vaccination using real-world data. I was also a recipient of the Vaccine Impact Modelling Consortium (VIMC) training in 2022, where I had the opportunity to connect with leading experts in the field.

## CAN YOU TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR CURRENT ROLE AND RESEARCH?

I currently serve as a Health Economist Consultant with the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, where I support National Immunization teams and NITAGs in strengthening their capacity in vaccine economic evaluations and immunization financing. One of my ongoing projects involves supporting Iraq's NITAG in conducting a budget impact analysis to inform a potential policy transition from measles-containing vaccine (MCV) to the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.



*"I support National Immunization teams and NITAGs in strengthening their capacity in vaccine economic evaluations and immunization financing."*

**PALWASHA ANWARI**

## HOW DO YOU LIKE TO SPEND YOUR TIME OUTSIDE OF WORK?

I recently relocated to Cairo for work and have been enjoying learning Arabic, exploring Egyptian cuisine, and visiting the city's many historical sites.

I also remain actively engaged with VIMC to stay connected with fellow vaccine modellers and to continue learning and exchanging knowledge.




**ARANI B. BOSIRE**

### HOW DID YOU GET STARTED WORKING IN MATHEMATICAL MODELLING / EPIDEMIOLOGY?

I got started through a university research project combining statistics and public health data. I was fascinated by how mathematical models could predict disease spread and guide real-world interventions. That experience sparked my interest in applying data science to solve complex health challenges.

### HOW DID YOU GET STARTED WORKING IN MATHEMATICAL MODELLING / EPIDEMIOLOGY?

My journey into epidemiology began right after finishing my first degree, when I got an internship at the Centre for Epidemiological Modelling and Analysis (CEMA) in Kenya. During the internship, I was introduced to statistical modelling through a project that looked into the causes of under-five mortality in Kenya. In March 2024, I also took part in a training offered by the Institute for Disease Modelling on “Agent-Based Modelling”. These experiences opened the door for me into the world of epidemiology and mathematical modelling.

### CAN YOU TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR CURRENT ROLE AND RESEARCH?

I am currently working as an Assistant Research Fellow at CEMA. I take part in different projects—some involve statistical modelling of health data, such as assessing how interventions affect access to healthcare, or mapping diseases using small area estimation. Others involve infectious disease modelling, such as modelling the transmission of Mpox in Kenya and the impacts of vaccination on the measles burden. I also help with mentoring and teaching. We run in-house courses for our colleagues on topics like Introduction to R Programming and basic statistics for epidemiology.

### CAN YOU TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR CURRENT ROLE AND RESEARCH?

I work as a Data Scientist at the Ministry of Health in Kenya. I am currently involved in analyzing large-scale health survey data to assess facility readiness and patient outcomes. My focus is on developing predictive models and dashboards to support evidence-based decision-making in healthcare systems, with a particular interest in resource allocation and quality improvement.

### HOW DO YOU LIKE TO SPEND YOUR TIME OUTSIDE OF WORK?

Outside of work, I enjoy hiking, working out, and reading classic novels. I also love exploring data projects in agriculture and occasionally help on our family farm—it keeps me grounded and connected to practical, real-world systems.


**STANLEY SAYIANKA**

### HOW DO YOU LIKE TO SPEND YOUR TIME OUTSIDE OF WORK?

Outside of work, I enjoy working on personal projects—trying out new ideas and learning more about math and statistics. I also love exploring new places, like museums, parks, and forests. Recently, I've been using my free time to catch up with family and friends—life does get busy.



# TECH UPDATE FROM THE MODELLING SUPPORT TEAM

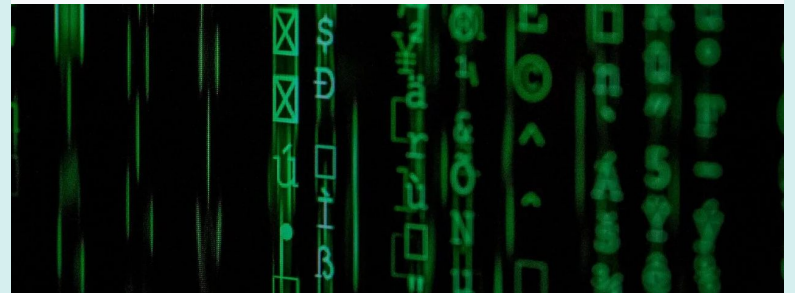
Rich FitzJohn (who leads the research software engineering team in the Department of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at Imperial College London), along with Wes Hinsley and Emma Russell—who have all contributed significant technical support to VIMC—share a brief update on some exciting behind-the-scenes work to improve the VIMC Reporting Portal:

*Over the last few months, we have been laying the groundwork for a major update to the Reporting Portal. The original reporting portal, "OrderlyWeb", and the reporting framework "orderly" have been overhauled while being used on other projects over the last few years. We have been making the montagu-specific changes and getting ready to release later this year. Once in place, we hope this will form the basis of more flexible model results submission too. We're excited to launch this soon, so keep a look out for changes on the horizon.*

We hope to share a more detailed update in the next issue of the newsletter as the rollout progresses!



VACCINE IMPACT  
MODELLING CONSORTIUM



## SPOTLIGHT ON VIMC: DR KATY GAYTHORPE DISCUSSES IMPACT AND INSIGHTS

**Dr Katy Gaythorpe** recently appeared in an episode of **Science in Context**, a video series produced by the **MRC Centre for Global Infectious Disease Analysis at Imperial College London**. In the episode, she speaks with Dr Sabine van Elsland about the work of the VIMC.

In the interview, Katy highlights how VIMC produces high-quality estimates of the public health impact of vaccination and explores the health outcomes of Gavi's investments.

The episode offers a clear and engaging introduction to VIMC's mission and methods for a broad audience.

 Watch the video here: **Science in Context – VIMC**





## CALL FOR PARTICIPATION – STUDY ON MODELLING AND POLICY IMPACT



Members of the VIMC network are invited to contribute insights to a study led by the **WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence**, in collaboration with the **Robert Koch Institute** and the **London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine**.

The study, ***Policy Impact and Process Evaluation of Advanced Analytics to Inform Public Health Decision-Making***, aims to map how infectious disease modelling informs policy and to develop a framework for evaluating and strengthening these connections.

### Who can participate?

Researchers, modellers, policy-makers, knowledge brokers, or civil servants who have experience using

or producing modelling for public health decision-making.

### What's involved?

Participation involves a 45-minute online interview (or in-person if based in Berlin). Insights from VIMC members and affiliates with experience in policy engagement are highly valued.

Further information about the study and interview process is provided in the participant information sheet, and those interested in taking part are asked to complete and return the consent form along with suggested interview dates.



[\[Participant Information Sheet\]](#)

[\[Consent Form\]](#)

For questions or to express interest, contact **Klara Röbl** (roebk@rki.de) or **Emil Iftekhar** (iftekhar@who.int).

## SHORT COURSE & SYMPOSIUM: VACCINOLOGY – SCIENCE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Location: **Nagasaki, Japan**  
 Dates: **1–5 September 2025**

With thanks to Kaja Abbas for sharing this opportunity.

Colleagues may be interested in the upcoming **Vaccinology – Science and Public Health programme** hosted in Nagasaki, Japan, which includes both a short course and a symposium:

- **Short Course (In-person, fee-based)**

A comprehensive training on the science, policy, and application of vaccines in public health.

More [information and registration](#)

- **Symposium (Hybrid, free of charge)**

A broader platform for discussion on current issues and innovations in vaccinology, open to both virtual and in-person participants.

[Symposium details](#)

This is a valuable opportunity for those working in vaccine modelling, implementation, or policy to engage with global experts and explore interdisciplinary perspectives.



**Vaccine Research and Development Center**  
**DEJIMA Infectious Disease Research Alliance**  
**Nagasaki University**