

Country Disease Outlook

Gabon

August 2023



World Health Organization

African Region

Background

The Gabonese Republic is a country in central Africa, bordered by Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, and the Republic of Congo. It is an upper middle-income country with a GDP per capita of US\$ 8,820 (2022) and a population of 2.4 million (2022).

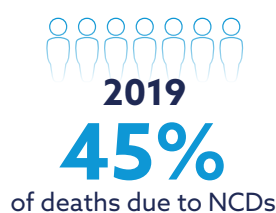
Key points

- ◆ Gabon has a high burden of communicable and non-communicable disease (NCDs), with the latter making up 45% of deaths in 2019. However, there has been limited progress made against the NCD Progress Indicators.
- ◆ Gabon improved its child survival rates between 2015 and 2021, however it is not yet meeting the SDG targets for neonatal or under-five mortality rates.
- ◆ Gabon is endemic for four of the five NTDs amenable to preventive chemotherapy through mass drug administration (MDA). In 2020, no MDA took place.
- ◆ In Gabon, the mortality rate of TB cases (all forms, excluding HIV coinfection) has increased since 2015, going from 67 to 94 per 100,000 population in 2021. Similarly, the TB mortality rate among HIV-positive people has increased from 31 to 74 in the same period.
- ◆ Gabon's vaccination coverage rates are not yet meeting the 90% target for vaccination in children, reaching 75% with both the third dose of DTP-containing vaccine and 64% with the first dose of measles-containing vaccine in 2021. It is important for Gabon to sustainably increase its vaccination coverage through routine immunization while also considering how to implement catch-up vaccination strategies in the country to ensure that no children are left unprotected from vaccine-preventable diseases into the future.

UHC/CN

Universal Health Coverage/Communicable and Non-communicable Diseases
WHO Regional Office for Africa





Broad disease outlook

The country has a high burden of both communicable (such as malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS) and non-communicable disease (NCDs). The latter was estimated to have caused 45% of deaths in 2019.

Communicable diseases

Malaria

Malaria remains a public health problem in Gabon with an estimated 535,939 cases in 2021 (giving incidence rate of 228.9 cases per 1,000), and resulting in 384 deaths. The malaria incidence rate has remained fairly steady since 2015 and as a result the country is off track to meet the targets set by the Global Technical Strategy for Malaria.

Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS

In 2021, incidence of tuberculosis for Gabon was 513 cases per 100,000 people. The mortality rate of TB cases (all forms, excluding HIV coinfection) has increased since 2015, going from 67 to 94 per 100,000 population in 2021. Similarly, the TB mortality rate among HIV-positive people has increased from 31 to 74 in the same period.

Gabon has not met the 95-95-95 goals:

- ▲ 73% of people living with HIV that know their status.
- ▲ 74% of people living with HIV who know their status are on treatment.
- ▲ There is limited data on the number of people living with HIV and on treatment who are virally suppressed.

Approximately 25,375 people were receiving antiretroviral treatment in 2021.

Neglected tropical diseases

Gabon was endemic for four of the five NTDs amenable to preventive chemotherapy through mass drug administration (MDA), namely lymphatic filariasis, schistosomiasis, soil-transmitted helminthiasis, and trachoma. In 2020, no MDA took place.

Other notable NTDs that remain endemic are human Africa trypanosomiasis (*gambiense*), chromoblastomycosis and other deep mycoses, taeniasis and cysticercosis, leprosy, and rabies.

Non-communicable diseases

NCDs are a significant health problem in Gabon. The age-standardised mortality rate across four major NCDs (Cardiovascular Disease, Chronic Respiratory Disease, Cancer and Diabetes) was high at 793 per 100,000 in males and 603 in females in 2021.

Gabon has implemented initial efforts on the tobacco taxes and tobacco smoke free/pollution, however there is very limited progress against the remaining indicators. These include those relating to NCD policy and plan, NCD guidelines, tobacco media campaign, the majority of the alcohol indicators, salt policies, trans fats policies, marketing to children and physical activity awareness.

Childhood Immunization

Gabon's coverage rates of vaccination in children have historically not been meeting the 90% target levels. In 2021, coverage for the third dose of DTP-containing vaccine was 75%, while the coverage rate for the first dose of measles vaccine was 64%. This resulted in an estimated 15,476 under-immunised children and 14,857 zero-dose children. It is important for Gabon to sustainably increase its vaccination coverage through routine immunization while also considering how to implement catch-up vaccination strategies in the country to ensure that no children are left unprotected from vaccine-preventable diseases into the future.

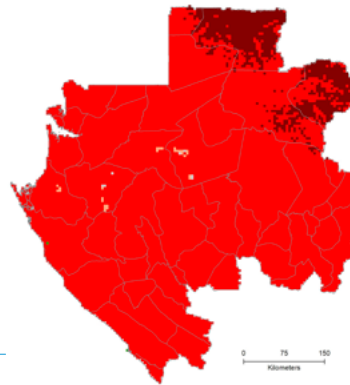
Child survival

Based on the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) estimates, the under-5 mortality rate has fallen from 50 to 40 per 1,000 live births between 2015 and 2021, although it is still well above the SDG target of 25 per 1,000 live births. Similarly, the neonatal mortality rate decreased from 22 to 19 per 1,000 live births in the same period, remaining above the SDG target of 12.

MALARIA

POPULATION AT RISK IN 2022	TOTAL MALARIA CASES IN 2021	TOTAL MALARIA DEATHS IN 2021
2.3 million people	535,939 million	384

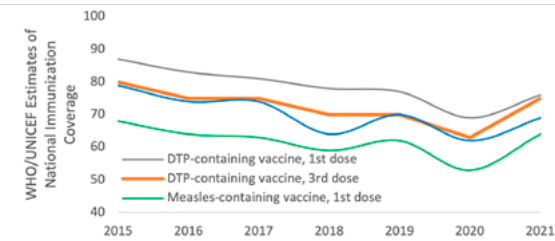
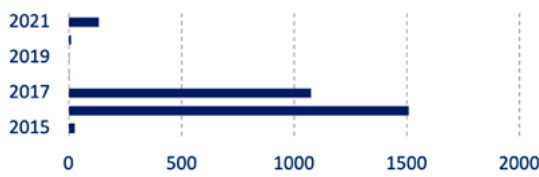
ITN use in children under five years 38.8% and 12.1% use of ACTs among those with fever for whom care was sought and received a finger or heel prick



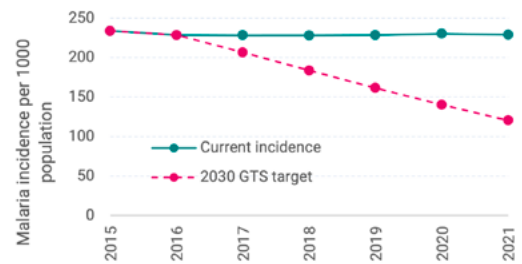
Plasmodium falciparum malaria prevalence in children in Gabon in 2020. Estimates from the Malaria Atlas project

EXPANDED PROGRAMME ON IMMUNIZATION IN CHILDREN

■ Measles



Malaria incidence in Gabon since 2015 compared to GTS targets shows that the country is not on track for GTS targets



Zero dose children 14,857

Under-immunized 15,476

WUENIC estimates show that vaccination coverage was reducing since 2015 but started to recover from 2020.

The measles outbreaks occurred in 2017 and 2021.

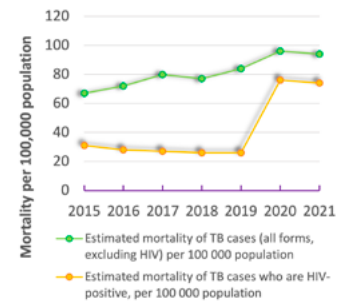
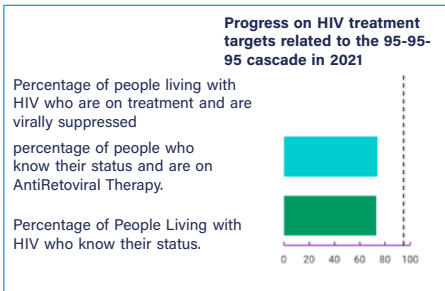
HIV AND TUBERCULOSIS

25,375 people receiving antiretroviral therapy in 2021

53% Treatment success rate for HIV-positive TB cases

4% of children (aged < 5 years) household contacts of bacteriologically-confirmed TB cases on preventive treatment

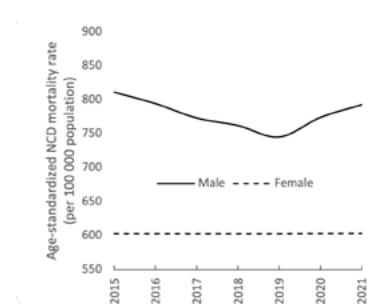
46% Domestic funding for TB
<50% Domestic funding for HIV



- Indicator 1 - Targets
- Indicator 2 - CRV Mortality
- Indicator 3 - Surveys
- Indicator 4 - NCD policy and Plan
- Indicator 5A - Tobacco taxes
- Indicator 5B - Tobacco smoke free/polution
- Indicator 5C - Tobacco health warning
- Indicator 5D - Tobacco advertising ban
- Indicator 5E - Tobacco media campaign
- Indicator 6A - Alcohol availability
- Indicator 6B - Alcohol advertising restrictions
- Indicator 6C - Alcohol taxes
- Indicator 7A - Salt policies
- Indicator 7B - Trans fats policies
- Indicator 7C - Marketing to children
- Indicator 8 - Physical activity awareness
- Indicator 9 - NCD guidelines

NCD PROGRESS INDICATORS

- Achieved
- Partially achieved
- Not achieved/Unknown



NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

Endemic NTDS requiring Preventive Chemotherapy (PC)

- Lymphatic filariasis
- Soil-transmitted helminthiasis
- Schistosomiasis
- Trachoma
- Onchocerciasis (non-endemic)

PC-NTDs treatment in 2021

0 Million targeted for MDA
0 Million treated with MDA

OTHER MAJOR NTDS

- Human Africa trypanosomiasis (*gambiense*)
- Chromoblastomycosis and other deep mycoses
- Taeniasis and cysticercosis
- Leprosy
- Rabies

