

WUENIC Talking Points: Lesotho

Revision Year: 2025

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Lesotho in the 'Africa' region



Overview

- None of the 12 childhood vaccines tracked for Lesotho achieved coverage of 90% or higher in 2025.
- Coverage of the first dose of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis-containing vaccine (DTP1) increased from 86% in 2024 to 88% in 2025, coverage of the third dose of DTP-containing vaccine (DTP3) increased from 86% in 2024 to 88% in 2025, and coverage of the first dose of the measles-containing vaccine (MCV1) declined from 90% in 2024 to 80% in 2025 in 2025.
- In 2025, the number of zero-dose children for DTP in Lesotho (6,000) was approximately 97% higher than the annual number proposed to achieve the IA2030 target of halving zero-dose children for DTP by 2030 (3,000), based on a linear trajectory of decline.

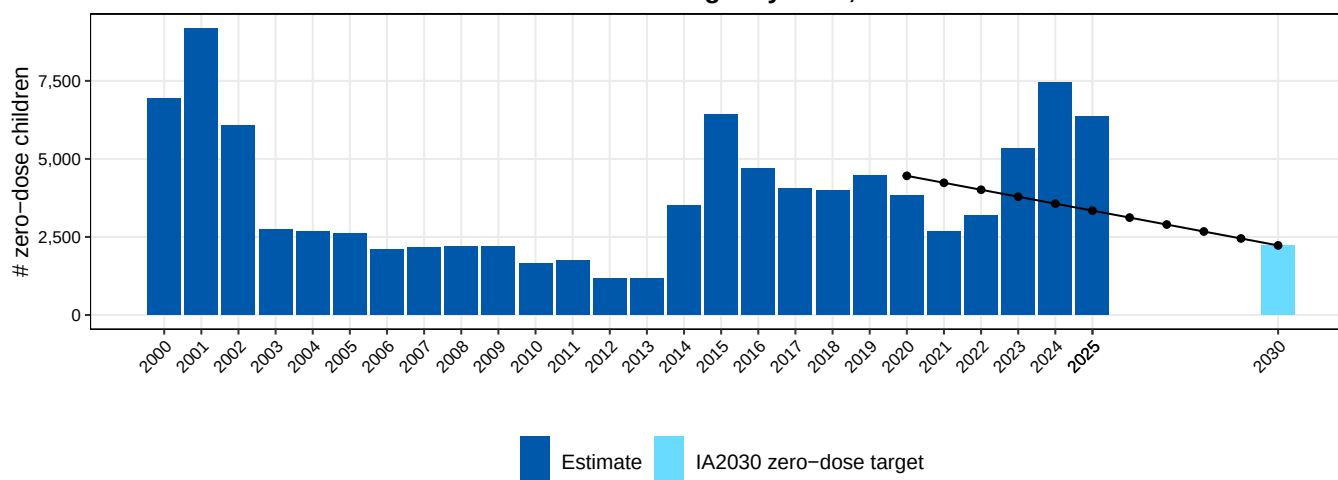
Vaccine coverage (%), Lesotho, 2000–2025

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
BCG	88	83	90	96	96	96	95	95	95	92	90	87	93	98	97	95	96	96	97	98	98	99	85	68	81	80
DTP1	87	83	89	95	95	95	96	96	96	96	97	97	98	98	94	89	92	93	93	92	93	95	94	90	86	88
DTP3	84	79	85	90	90	89	89	88	88	91	93	96	95	93	88	83	87	89	90	92	93	95	92	90	86	88
Hib3										91	94	96	95	93	88	83	87	89	90	92	93	95	92	90	86	88
HepB3				17	60	87	91	90	88	91	93	96	95	93	88	83	87	89	90	92	93	95	92	90	86	88
PCVC																29	66	82	83	95	95	95	93	90	86	88
RotaC																			70	94	92	79	91	83	72	87
IPV1																	44	0	39	92	93	97	90	87	87	89
IPVC																										57
MCV1	74	70	78	85	84	83	82	81	80	84	88	92	91	90	92	93	90	89	89	90	90	90	84	76	90	80
RCV1																		89	89	90	90	90	84	76	90	80
MCV2		46	50	47	56	68	80	80	80	81	81	82	82	79	78	75	74	70	69	66	65	67	63	72	74	70
HPVc																							55	58	70	30



Source: WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2025 revision.

Estimated number of zero-dose children, 2000–2025 and target by 2030, Lesotho

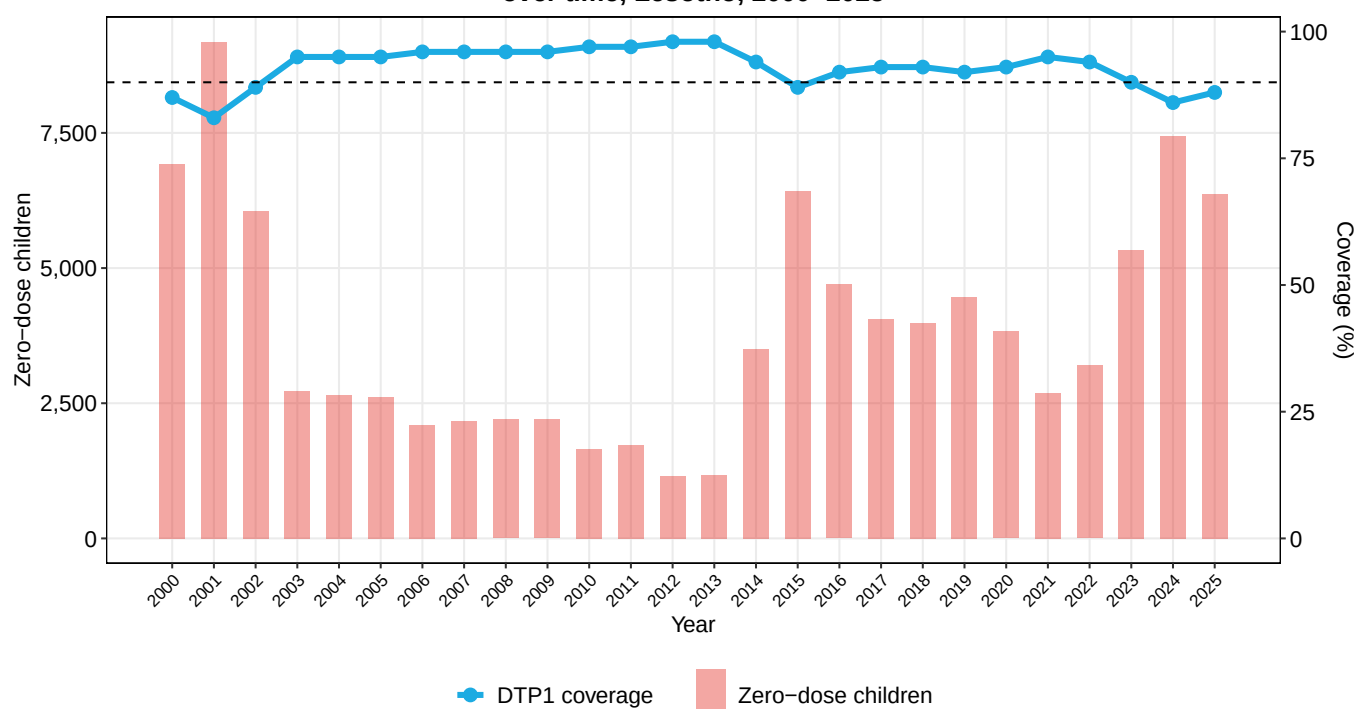


Source: WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2025 revision.
 Note: The Immunization Agenda 2030 (IA2030) calls on all countries to reduce the number of zero-dose children in 2019 in half by 2030.
 Dark blue bars are the estimated number of zero-dose children in 2000–2025, light blue bar is the target number of zero-dose children by 2030.
 The line and points show the yearly progress and trajectory to meet the target by 2030, based on a linear decline.

DTP1: Reaching zero-dose children

- Coverage of DTP1 stood at 88% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (92%) and higher than in 2024 (86%).
- The percentage of zero-dose children was 97 percentage points higher than the IA2030 target in 2025. There were approximately 6,000 zero-dose children in 2025, more than the 4,000 in 2019 but fewer than the 7,000 in 2024.
- Coverage of DTP1 in Lesotho (88%) was higher than the Eastern and Southern Africa regional average of 85% in 2025.
- DTP1-to-DTP3 dropout in 2025 was 0%, the same as in 2019. Low DTP dropout rates imply good ability to provide a complete vaccine series early in life.

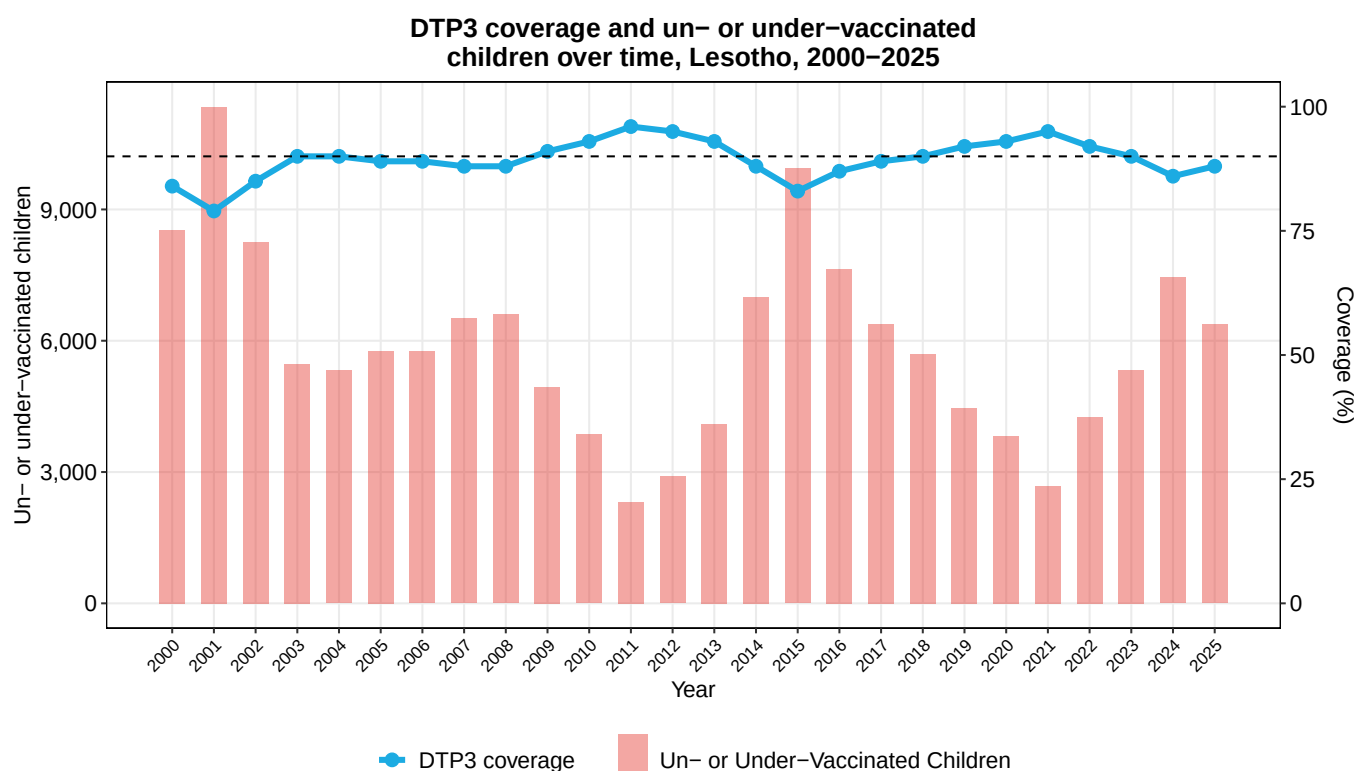
DTP1 coverage and zero-dose children over time, Lesotho, 2000–2025



Dotted line shows the IA2030 target of 90% coverage
Source: WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2025 revision.

DTP3: A marker of routine immunization service delivery to children

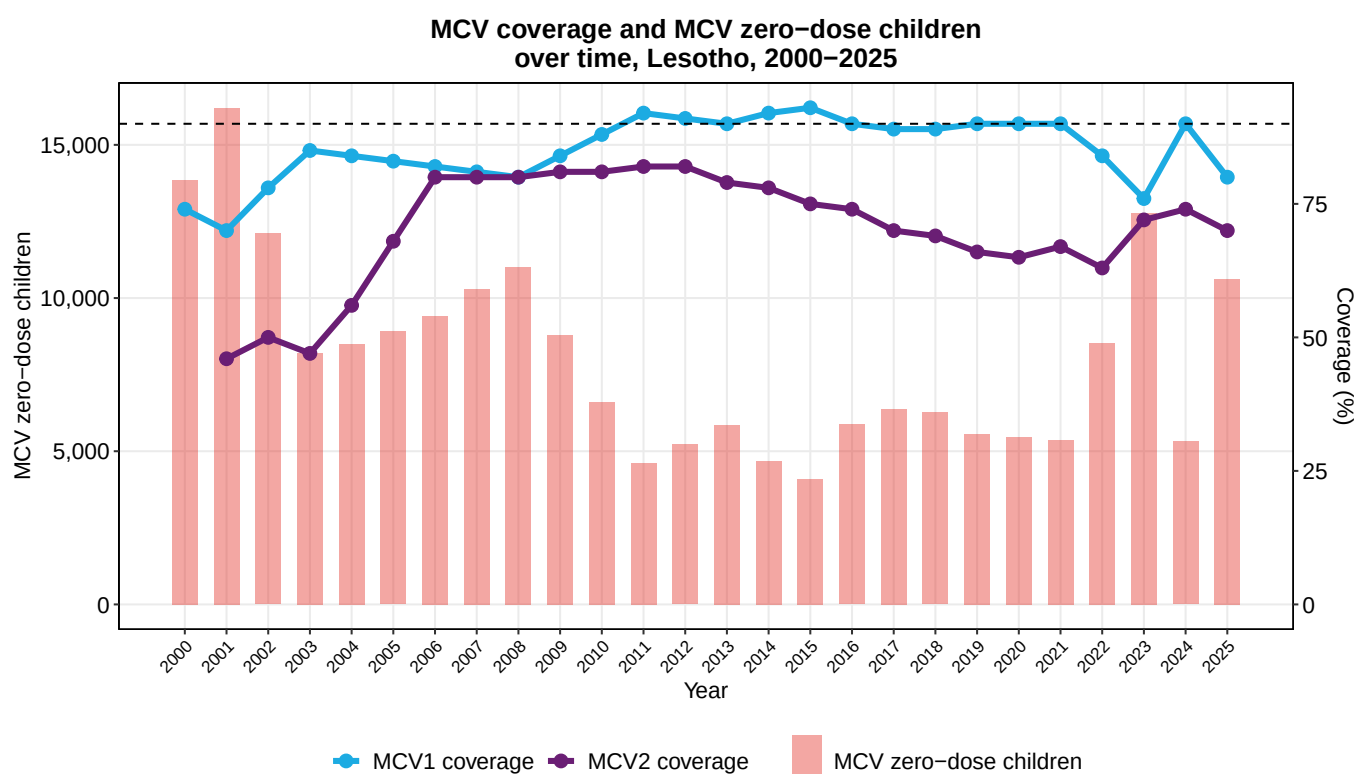
- Coverage of DTP3 stood at 88% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (92%) and higher than in 2024 (86%).
- The number of children vaccinated with DTP3 decreased from 51,000 in 2019 to 47,000 in 2025.
- In 2025, there were 6,000 children un- or under-vaccinated in Lesotho.
- In 2025, 0% of children who received DTP1 did not receive DTP3. This 0% dropout rate was the same as in 2019 (0%) and the same as the 2024 dropout rate (0%).
- Coverage of DTP3 in Lesotho (88%) was higher than the Eastern and Southern Africa regional average of 80% in 2025.



Dotted line shows the IA2030 target of 90% coverage
Source: WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2025 revision.

MCV: Canary in the coal mine

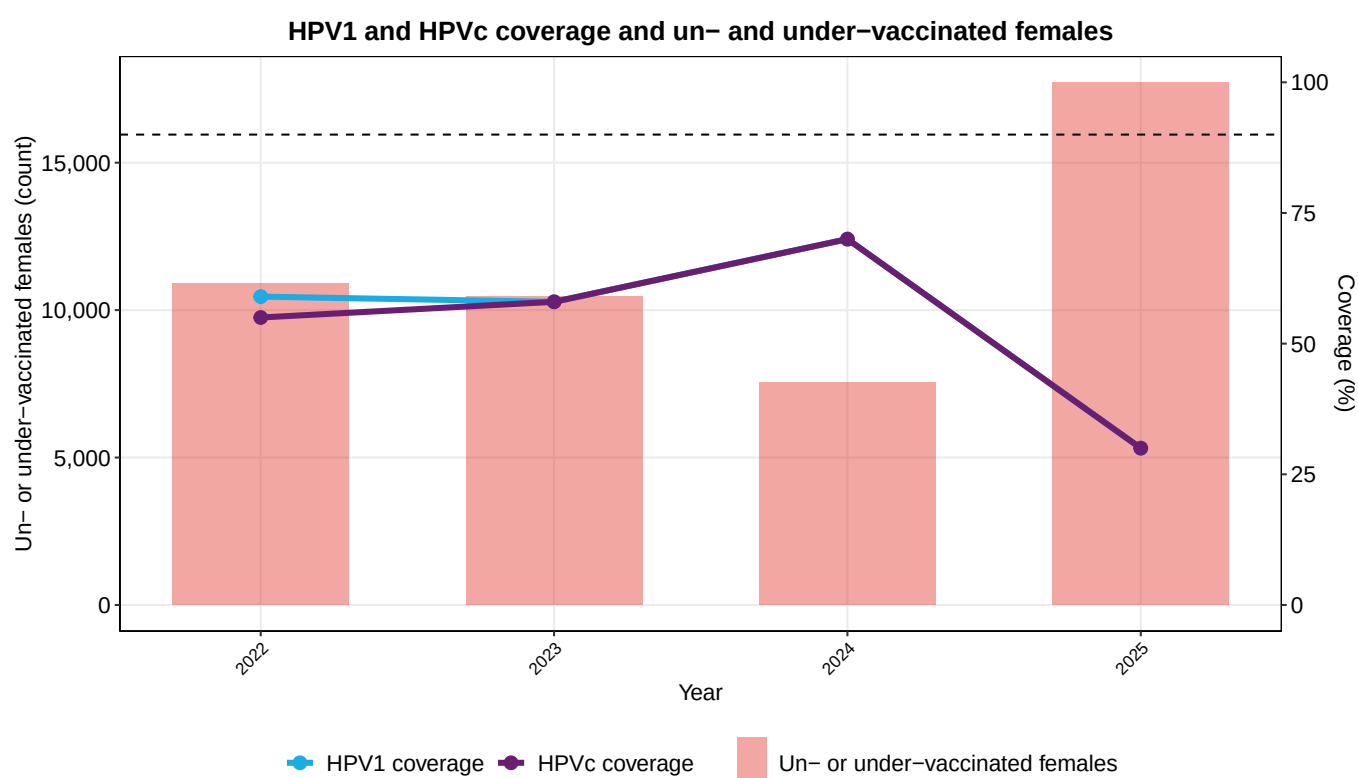
- Coverage of MCV1 stood at 80% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (90%) and lower than in 2024 (90%).
- Coverage of the second dose of the measles-containing vaccine (MCV2) increased from 66% in 2019 to 70% in 2025. This leaves 11,000 children without any protection against measles and another 5,000 with only partial protection.
- In 2025, 9% of children who received DTP1 did not receive MCV1. This 9% dropout rate was 7 percentage points higher than in 2019 (2%) and 14 percentage points higher than the 2024 dropout rate (-5%).
- Lesotho has achieved MCV1 coverage above 80% over all of the last 3 years.
- Coverage of MCV1 in Lesotho (80%) was higher than the Eastern and Southern Africa regional average of 77% in 2025.



Dotted line shows the IA2030 target of 90% coverage
Source: WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2025 revision.

HPV

- Programme coverage of HPV1 among females decreased from 70% to 30% between 2024 and 2025, and coverage of the last dose (HPVc) also decreased from 70% to 30%.
- HPVc coverage remains well below the IA2030 target of 90%.
- In 2025, approximately 18,000 females in Lesotho did not receive any HPV vaccination (un-vaccinated).
- Among Eastern and Southern Africa region peers, Lesotho ranked 15 out of 17 countries in HPVc coverage in 2025.



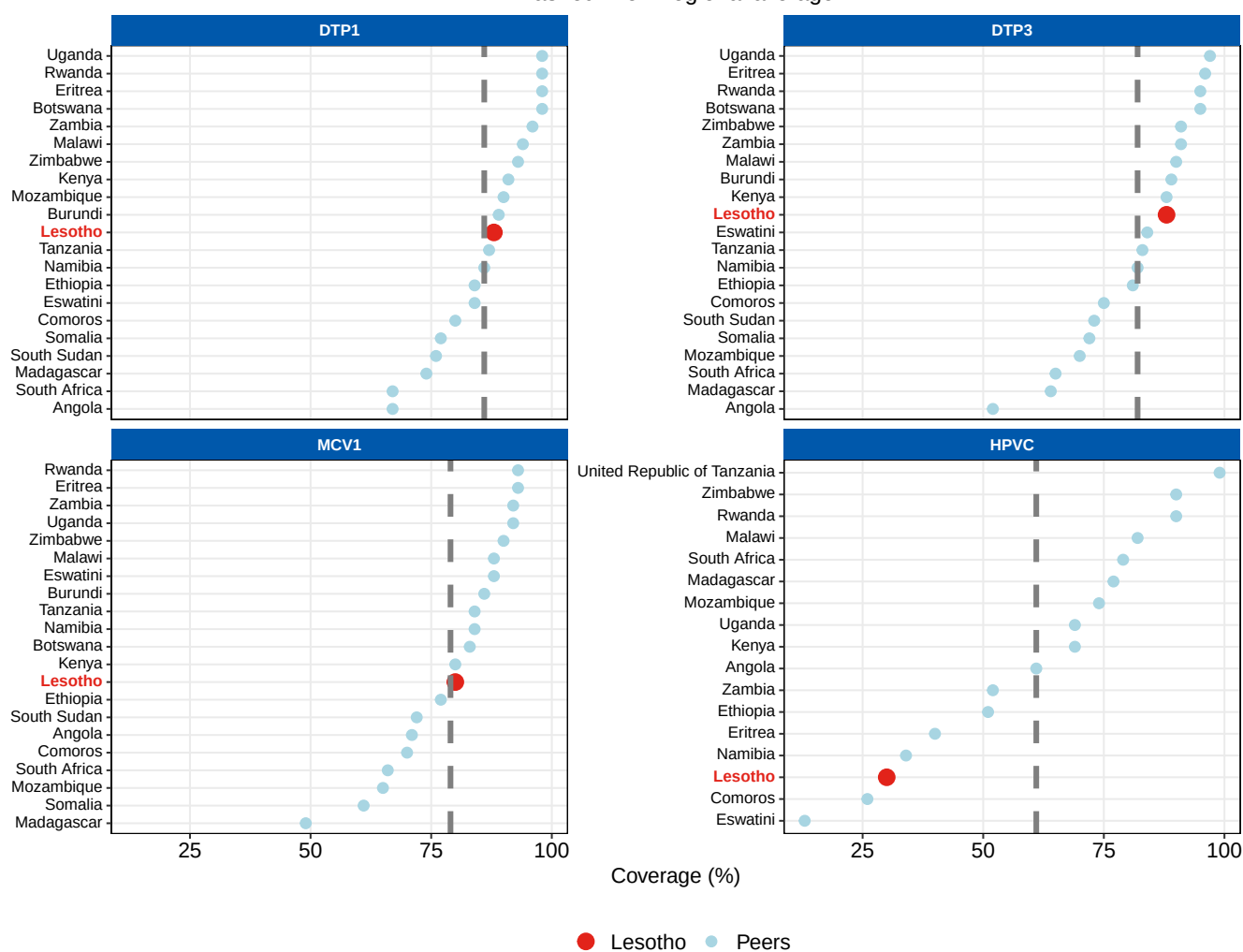
Dotted line shows the IA2030 target of 90% coverage
 Source: WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2025 revision.

Regional Comparison

The chart below shows how Lesotho compares to other countries in the Eastern and Southern Africa region on DTP1, DTP3, MCV1, and HPVc coverage in 2025. The dashed line represents the regional average for each vaccine.

Coverage comparison: Lesotho vs. ESAR peers, 2025

Dashed line = regional average



Source: WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2025 revision.

Additional Vaccines

- Coverage of BCG stood at 80% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (98%) and lower than in 2024 (81%).
- Coverage of HepB3 stood at 88% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (92%) but higher than in 2024 (86%).
- Coverage of Hib3 stood at 88% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (92%) but higher than in 2024 (86%).
- Coverage of IPV1 stood at 89% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (92%) but higher than in 2024 (87%).
- Coverage of PCVC stood at 88% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (95%) but higher than in 2024 (86%).
- Coverage of RotaC stood at 87% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (94%) but higher than in 2024 (72%).

Additional vaccine coverage (%), Lesotho, 2000–2025

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
BCG	88	83	90	96	96	96	95	95	95	92	90	87	93	98	97	95	96	96	97	98	98	99	85	68	81	80	
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IPV1																	44	0	39	92	93	97	90	87	87	89	
PCVC																	29	66	82	83	95	95	95	93	90	86	88
RotaC																				70	94	92	79	91	83	72	87



Source: WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2025 revision.

Appendix

WHO/UNICEF Estimates of National Immunization Coverage (WUENIC)

Each year, WHO and UNICEF review national immunization data from Member States, including administrative and official coverage, survey estimates and contextual information, and use rules-based data triangulation approach to assess coverage. Estimates are produced independently, without borrowing data from other countries, and are not based on ad hoc adjustments. In some cases, they rely on a single source, typically nationally reported coverage. When data for a specific country-vaccine-year are unavailable, values from adjacent years are interpolated or extrapolated, and conflicting sources are assessed to determine the most reliable estimate, considering potential biases and expert opinion.

Methods:

- [Burton et al. 2009. WHO and UNICEF estimates of national infant immunization coverage: methods and processes](#)
- [Burton et al. 2012. A formal representation of the WHO and UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage: a computational logic approach](#)
- [Brown et al. 2013. An introduction to the grade of confidence used to characterize uncertainty around the WHO and UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage](#)

These talking points present the latest WUENIC estimates (published 15 July 2026).

Definitions of immunization terms:

- Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG): vaccine against tuberculosis
- Hepatitis B birth dose, given within 24 hours after birth (HepBB)
- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis vaccine, first dose (DTP1) and third dose (DTP3)
- Hepatitis B vaccine, third dose (HepB3)
- Haemophilus influenzae type B vaccine, third dose (Hib3)
- Inactivated polio vaccine, first dose (IPV1) and last dose (IPVC)
- Measles containing vaccine, first dose (MCV1) and second dose (MCV2)
- Rotavirus vaccine, last dose (RotaC)
- Pneumococcal vaccine, last dose (PCV)
- Yellow Fever vaccine (YFV)
- Meningococcal A vaccine (MengA)
- Human Papillomavirus vaccine, first dose (HPV1) and last dose (HPVc)

Additional resources: <https://data.unicef.org/resources/immunization/>