

WUENIC Talking Points: Sierra Leone

Revision Year: 2025

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Sierra Leone in the 'Africa' region



Overview

- A total of 13 childhood vaccines are tracked for Sierra Leone; of these, 9 reached the 90% coverage target or higher in 2025.
- Coverage of the first dose of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis-containing vaccine (DTP1) was the same in 2025 as it was in 2024 (92%), coverage of the third dose of DTP-containing vaccine (DTP3) was the same in 2025 as it was in 2024 (91%), and coverage of the first dose of the measles-containing vaccine (MCV1) was the same in 2025 as it was in 2024 (90%) in 2025.
- In 2025, the number of zero-dose children for DTP in Sierra Leone (20,000) was approximately 127% higher than the annual number proposed to achieve the IA2030 target of halving zero-dose children for DTP by 2030 (9,000), based on a linear trajectory of decline.

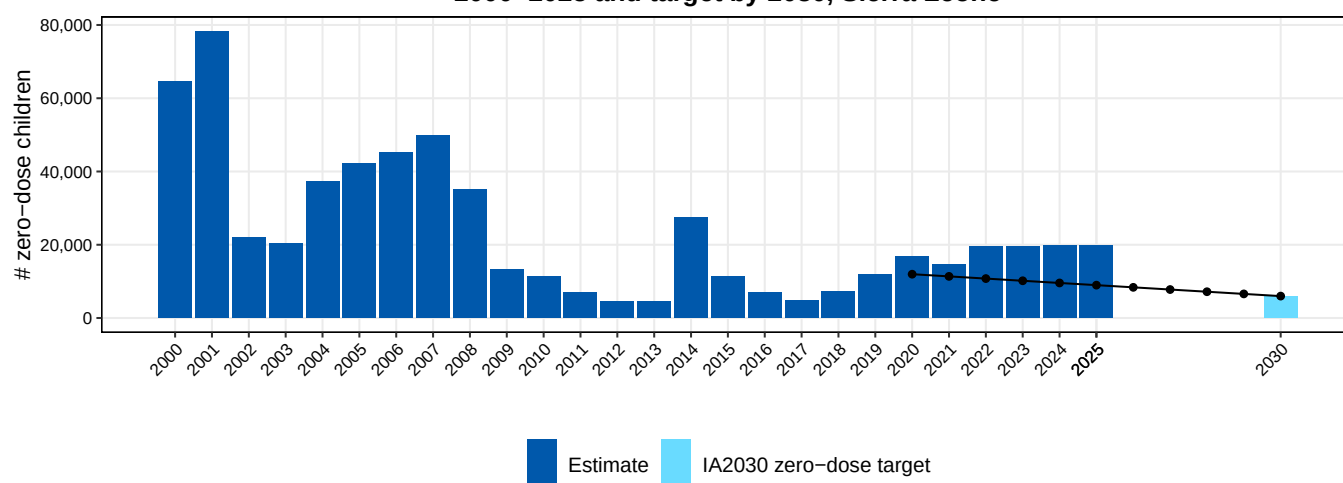
Vaccine coverage (%), Sierra Leone, 2000–2025

	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	74	63	76	89	86	85	83	82	91	96	97	97	98	99	90	90	92	90	94	98	90	98	97	97	97	97
DTP1	64	58	89	90	82	80	79	77	84	94	95	97	98	98	88	95	97	98	97	95	93	94	92	92	92	92
DTP3	44	38	53	73	65	65	64	64	77	84	86	89	91	92	83	86	84	90	93	95	91	92	91	91	91	91
Hib3								63	77	84	86	89	91	92	83	86	84	90	93	95	91	92	91	91	91	91
HepB3								63	77	84	86	89	91	92	83	86	84	90	93	95	91	92	91	91	91	91
PCVC											75	92	92		83	86	84	90	92	94	91	90	93	93	93	93
RotaC															53	85	95	92	92	92	90	75	88	88	88	88
IPV1																			60	86	89	93	91	91	91	91
IPVC																						4	35	75	75	75
MCV1	37	50	62	73	76	71	65	60	73	80	82	84	86	85	80	78	85	80	87	93	87	87	90	90	90	90
RCV1																					87	87	90	90	90	90
MCV2																60	50	55	64	72	67	67	73	73	73	73
YFV		71	73	75	70	65	60	64	80	82	83	85	85	80	78	80	80	85	90	86	85	73	85	85	85	85
HPVc																								24	61	77



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

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

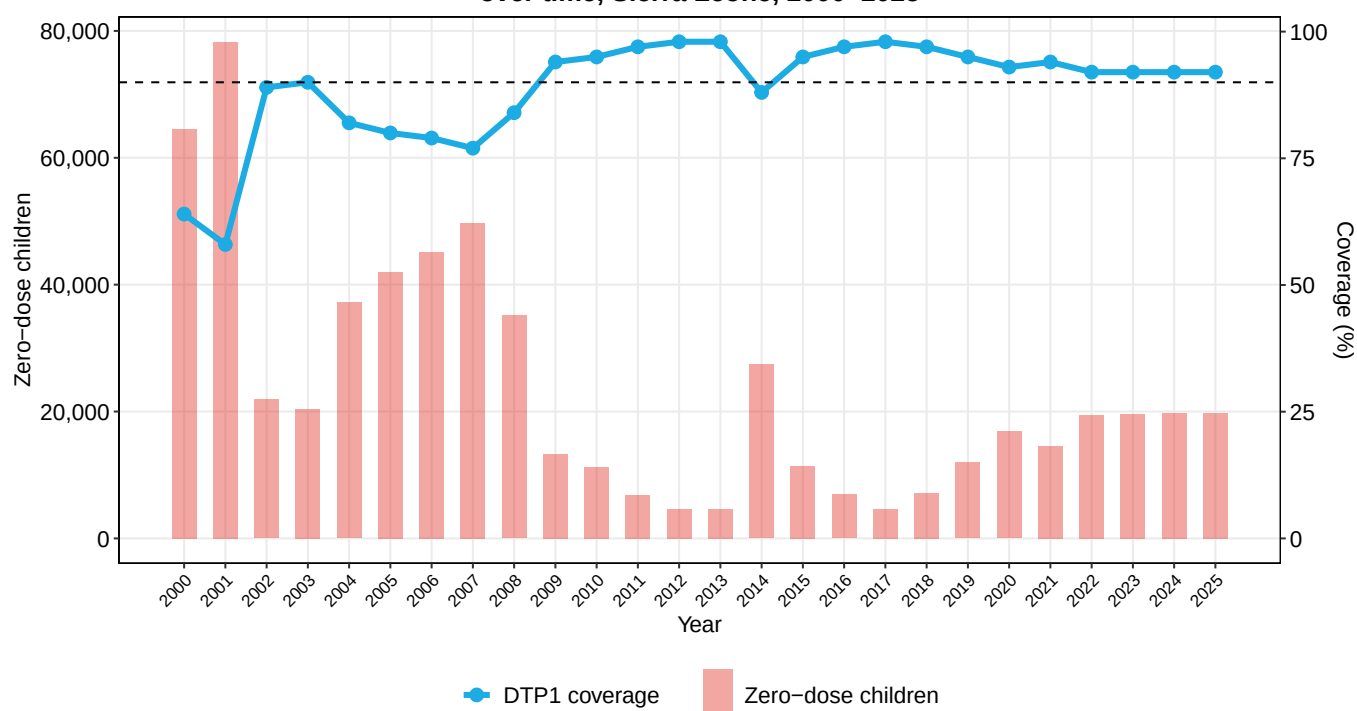


Source: WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2025 revision.
 Note: The Immunization Agenda 2030 (IA2030) calls on all countries to reduce the number of zero-dose children in half by 2030.
 Dark blue bars are the estimated number of zero-dose children in 2000–2025.
 Light blue bar is 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 92% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (95%) and the same as in 2024 (92%).
- The percentage of zero-dose children was 127 percentage points higher than the IA2030 target in 2025. There were approximately 20,000 zero-dose children in 2025, more than the 12,000 in 2019 and more than the 20,000 in 2024.
- Coverage of DTP1 in Sierra Leone (92%) was higher than the West and Central Africa regional average of 81% in 2025.
- DTP1-to-DTP3 dropout in 2025 was 1%, 1 percentage point higher than in 2019 (0%). Low DTP dropout rates imply good ability to provide a complete vaccine series early in life.

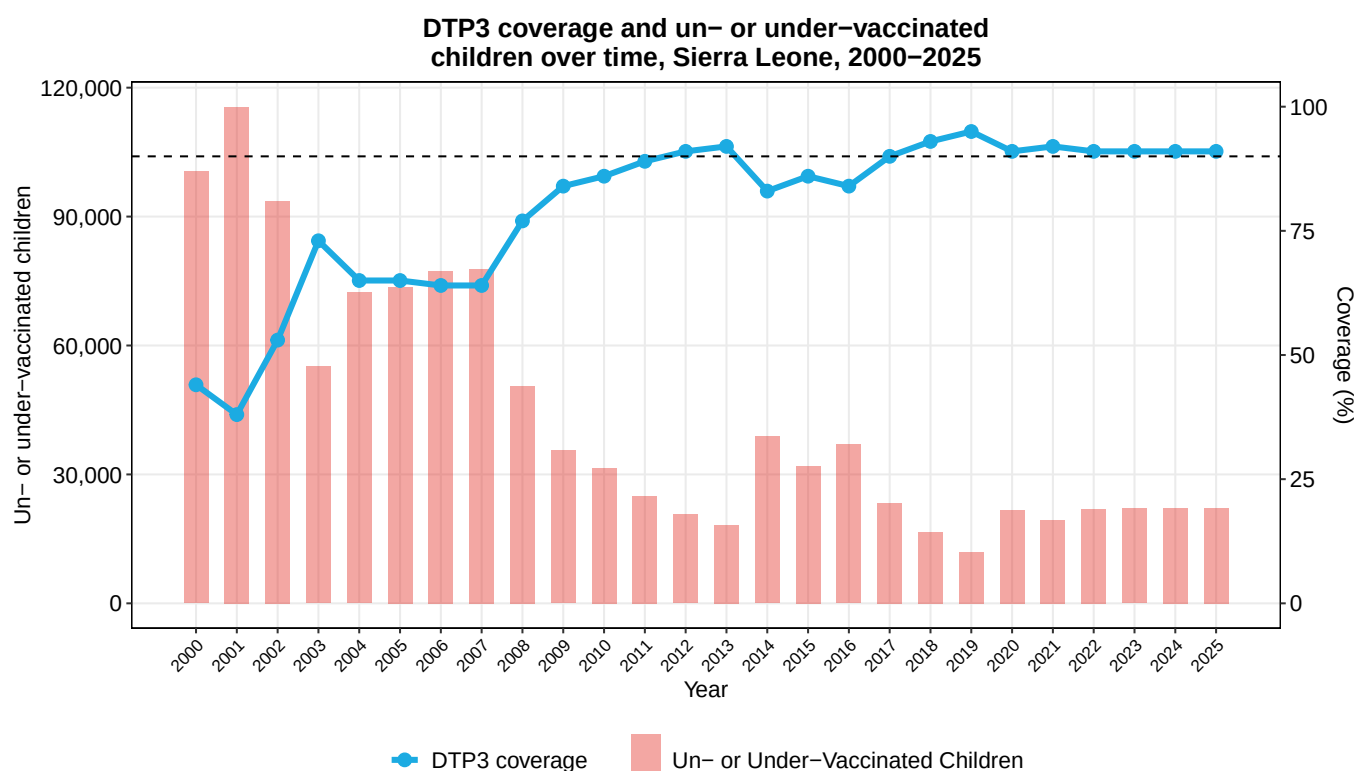
DTP1 coverage and zero-dose children over time, Sierra Leone, 2000–2025



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

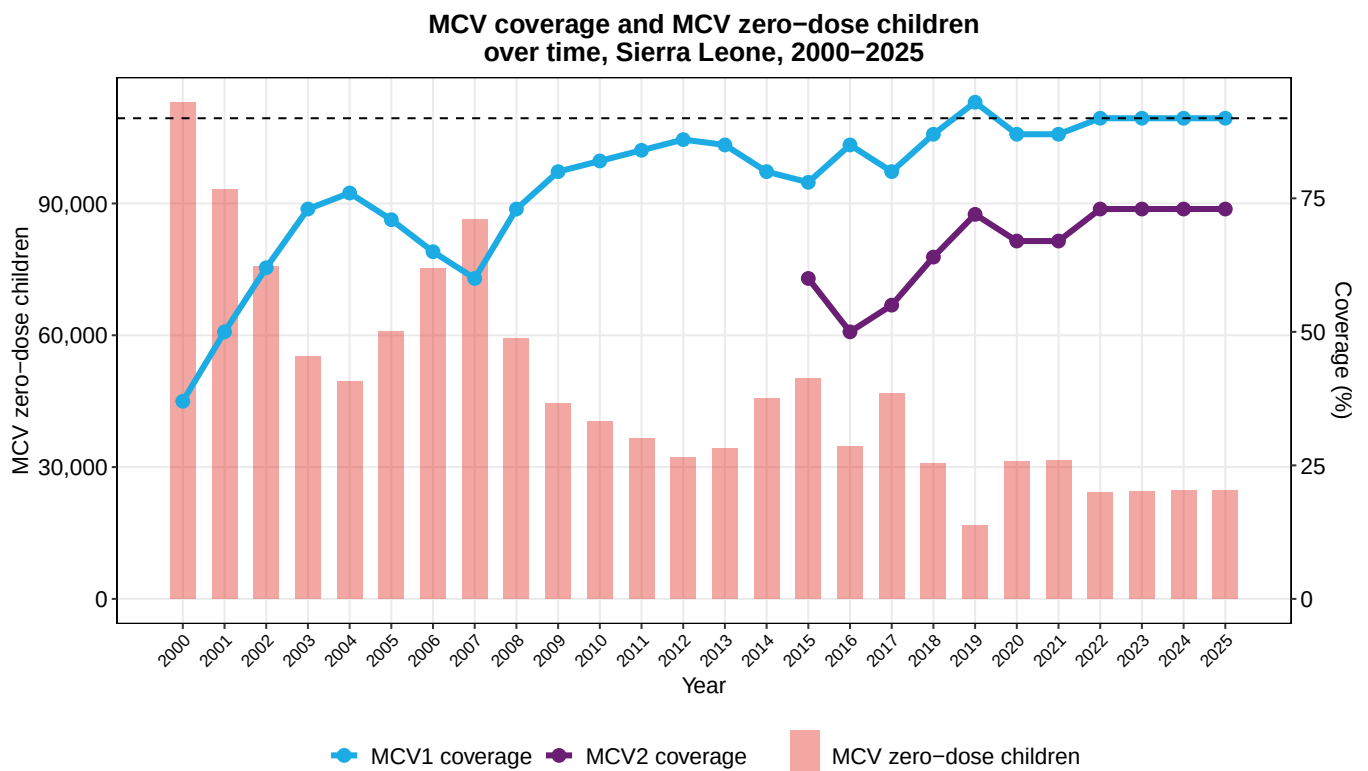
- Coverage of DTP3 stood at 91% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (95%) and the same as in 2024 (91%).
- The number of children vaccinated with DTP3 decreased from 227,000 in 2019 to 225,000 in 2025.
- In 2025, there were 22,000 children un- or under-vaccinated in Sierra Leone.
- In 2025, 1% of children who received DTP1 did not receive DTP3. This 1% dropout rate was 1 percentage points higher than in 2019 (0%) and the same as the 2024 dropout rate (1%).
- Coverage of DTP3 in Sierra Leone (91%) was higher than the West and Central Africa regional average of 71% 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

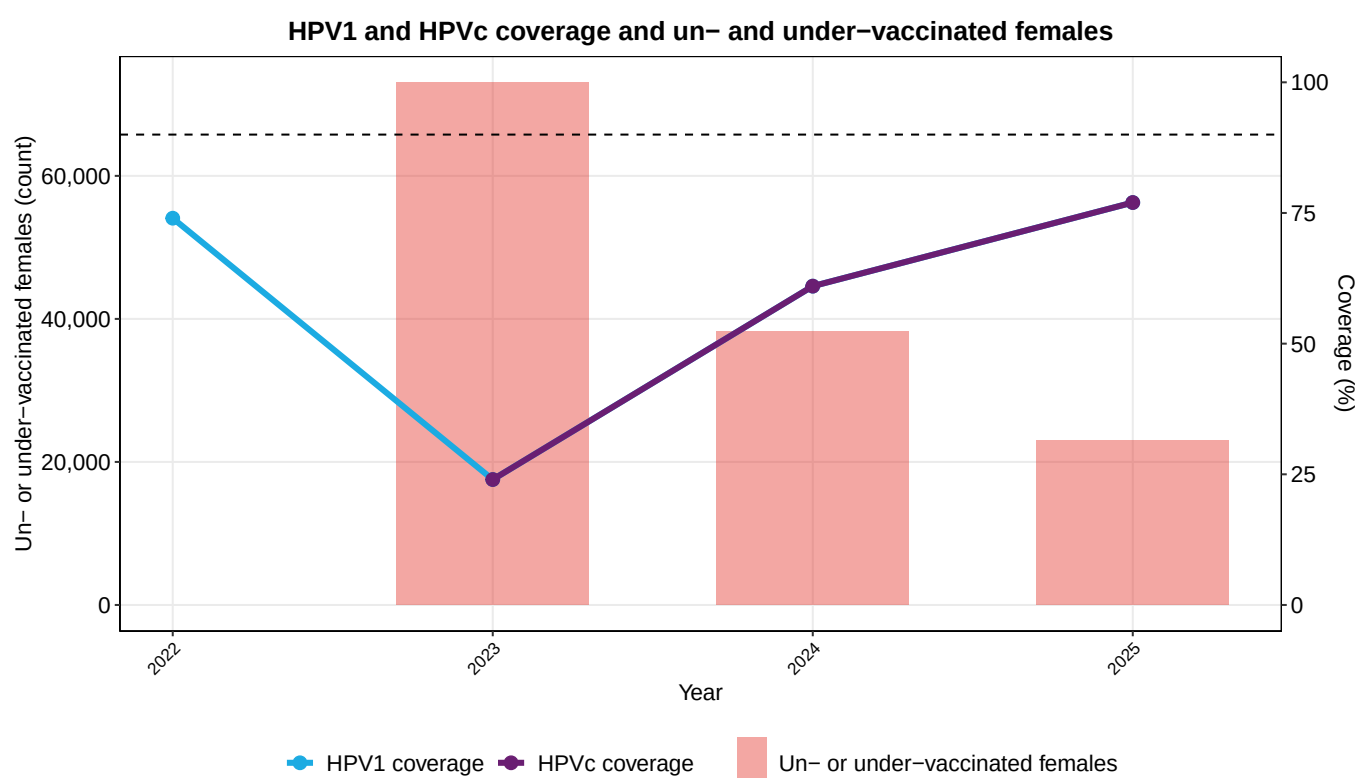
- Coverage of MCV1 stood at 90% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (93%) and the same as in 2024 (90%).
- Coverage of the second dose of the measles-containing vaccine (MCV2) remained relatively stable, within 1 percentage point of the 2019 level. This leaves 25,000 children without any protection against measles and another 39,000 with only partial protection.
- In 2025, 2% of children who received DTP1 did not receive MCV1. This 2% dropout rate was the same as in 2019 (2%) and the same as the 2024 dropout rate (2%).
- Sierra Leone has achieved MCV1 coverage above 80% over all of the last 3 years.
- Coverage of MCV1 in Sierra Leone (90%) was higher than the West and Central Africa regional average of 64% 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 increased from 61% to 77% between 2024 and 2025, and coverage of the last dose (HPVc) also increased from 61% to 77%.
- HPVc coverage remains well below the IA2030 target of 90%, though it is trending upward.
- In 2025, approximately 23,000 females in Sierra Leone did not receive any HPV vaccination (unvaccinated).
- Among West and Central Africa region peers, Sierra Leone ranked 7 out of 15 countries in HPVc coverage in 2025.



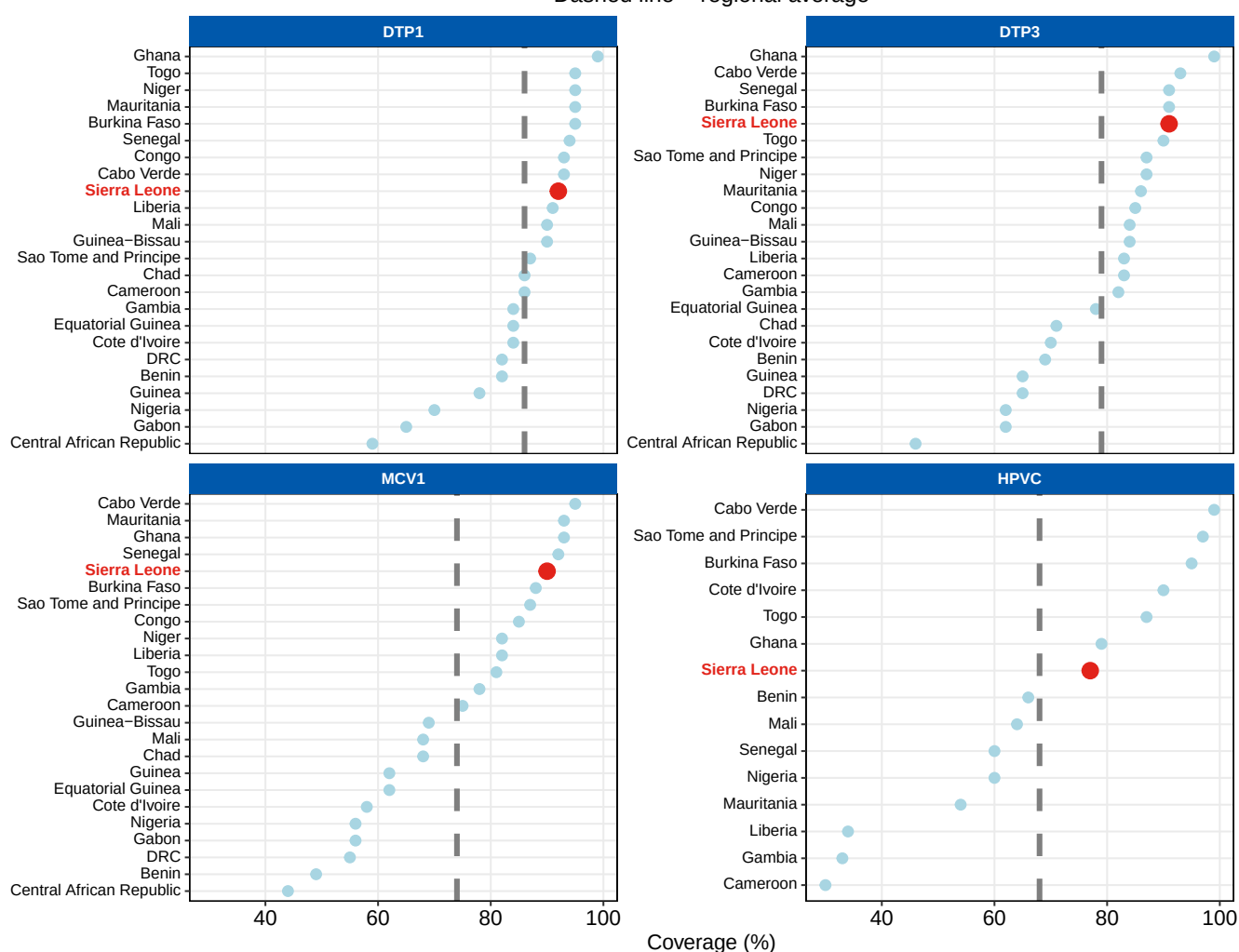
Dotted line shows the IA2030 target of 90% coverage
 Source: WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2025 revision.

Regional Comparison

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

Coverage comparison: Sierra Leone vs. WCAR peers, 2025

Dashed line = regional average



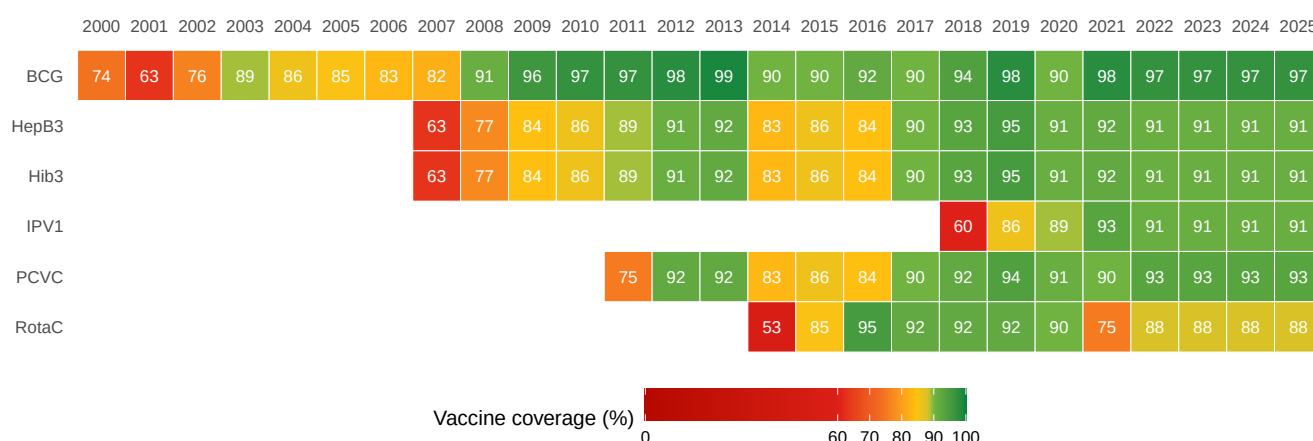
● Sierra Leone ● Peers

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

Additional Vaccines

- Coverage of BCG stood at 97% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (98%) and the same as in 2024 (97%).
- Coverage of HepB3 stood at 91% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (95%) and the same as in 2024 (91%).
- Coverage of Hib3 stood at 91% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (95%) and the same as in 2024 (91%).
- Coverage of IPV1 stood at 91% in 2025. This is higher than in 2019 (86%) and the same as in 2024 (91%).
- Coverage of PCVC stood at 93% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (94%) and the same as in 2024 (93%).
- Coverage of RotaC stood at 88% in 2025. This is lower than in 2019 (92%) and the same as in 2024 (88%).

Additional vaccine coverage (%), Sierra Leone, 2000–2025



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/>