

Alix Judith Nicole Boisson

Phone: 001 (480) 309-5595 | Email: ajnboisson@gmail.com

Nationality: American / French

RESEARCH INTERESTS

With a PhD in Health Policy and Management, I specialize in implementation science, quality improvement, and policy reform in low-resource, conflict-affected, and vulnerable settings. As a health services researcher, I use evidence-based solutions to address barriers to healthcare access and enhance the quality of health services across diverse health systems.

EDUCATION

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC

May 2023

PhD, Health Policy and Management

- *Minor:* Organization and Implementation Science
- *Dissertation title:* Vaccination of Newborns - Innovative Strategies to Hasten elimination of Hepatitis B Virus in Kinshasa Province, the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- *Committee:* Bruce Fried, PhD (Chair), Peyton Thompson, M.D., M.S.C.R., Christopher Shea, PhD, Marisa Domino, PhD, Marcel Yotebieng, M.D., PhD

London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK

Dec 2015

MSc History of International Relations

- *Dissertation title:* Zambia's Failed Response to the Zimbabwean Violence in the Gukurahundi Massacres: Early 1980's, Distinction

University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona

Jun 2014

Double BSc, Political Science and French Business, Minor Spanish Literature

- Regents High Honors Endorsement Scholarship, GPA: 3.71

Sciences Po, Paris, France

May 2013

Certificate in Political Science

- One-year Exchange Program

RECENT EXPERIENCE

World Health Organization

Francophone cohort supporting National Quality Policy and Strategy (NQPS)

May 2023 - Present

Contractor

- Active member of a select cohort of French-speaking consultants, specifically assigned by the World Health Organization (WHO), to support WHO member states in enhancing the performance of their health systems by developing, refining and implementing a national strategic direction for quality of health care.

WHO EMRO, Quality Policy and Strategy Team

Nov 2023 – Present

Contractor

- Conducting a situational analysis of quality and safety of the healthcare system in Kuwait.
- Producing and presenting a situational report that summarizes the main findings of the country's analysis.

Integrated Health Services Department (IHS), Quality of Care Unit (QOC)

Jun 2023 – Oct 2023

Contractor

- Developed a final report for a multi-country (Nigeria, Niger, Ivory Coast, DRC, Chad) Service Delivery Innovations Strategic Initiative for Global Fund.
- Conducted and analyzed qualitative interviews to gather lessons learned and insights from participating focal points from the national, district and facility levels.
- Developed an orientation package for countries wishing to embark on their national quality and patient safety of health care journeys.

Quality of Healthcare and Patient Safety in FCV Settings, WHO-led Qatar-based training

September 2023

Contractor, Quality Expert

- Supported the creation of implementation science specific module centered on implementation of action plans to address quality and patient safety in fragile, conflict-affected and vulnerable (FCV) settings.

- Facilitated five-day training for Afghan Ministry of Health on patient safety and quality of care improvement in FCV settings.
- Led module training specific to implementation and quality improvement science.

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Mar 2023 - Present

Pediatric Infectious Diseases, School of Medicine

Research Specialist

- Assuming a leadership role in the data analysis and manuscript development process for the Shift in Vaccine Confidence (SVC) study conducted in Kinshasa, DRC. Designed and implemented the comprehensive mixed methods study to assess changes in vaccine confidence before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Exploring various themes and factors influencing participants' uptake of the hepatitis B vaccine, contributing valuable insights to the field.
- Providing essential research coordination and contributed to the development of data systems for the COMBAT trial. This double-blinded, randomized, placebo-controlled feasibility trial aims to streamline hepatitis B care for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in Kinshasa, DRC.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Dissertation Research

Aug 2019 - Feb 2023

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, Chapel Hill, NC in partnership with Kinshasa School of Global Public Health, Kinshasa, the DRC

- **Title:** VaNISH-HBV: Vaccination of Newborns – Innovative Strategies to Hasten elimination of hepatitis B Virus in Kinshasa Province, the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- **Overview:** I aimed to provide research, evidence, and implementation strategies to the DRC Ministry of Health to advocate for the revision of national birth-dose vaccine distribution and health policies. Throughout this process, I traveled multiple times to the DRC to oversee research activities, engage with local stakeholders, and advocate for hepatitis B treatment, services, and prevention, with a particular focus on improving the uptake of all birthdose vaccines (HepB-BD, BCG, OPV0). Guided by community input, I utilized an intervention mapping approach to assess the determinants of birth-dose vaccine uptake and developed an implementation strategy, operational plans, facility guidance, and educational materials to enhance vaccine uptake. This involved conducting a needs assessment using quantitative and qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups with expectant mothers, facility informants, and national stakeholders in French. I also evaluated immunization trends through survey data from a quality improvement study conducted in 105 maternity clinics in the Kinshasa Province, aiming to understand barriers to timely infant vaccine uptake.

Graduate Research Assistant

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, Humanitarian Health Initiative

Supervisor: Sheila Leatherman CBE, Hon FRCP [WHO lead advisor for National Quality]

Aug 2021 - May 2023

WHO National Policy and Quality Strategy Team

- Facilitated the development of a set of Health Policy papers focused on identifying data gaps and assessing the quality of health services in a select group of countries. The paper aimed to showcase the utilization of existing public data sources, despite their imperfections, to compile quality metrics for lower-resourced and fragile, conflict-affected, and vulnerable (FCV) countries.
- Assisted in the creation of an Editorial piece that highlighted the current state of quality measurements in health systems operating in fragile, conflict-affected, and vulnerable settings. Emphasized the need for standardized and regular measurements across these countries to improve healthcare outcomes
- Collaborated with the WHO National Policy and Quality Strategy Team on a five-country, Global Fund funded, initiative in West and Central Africa. Provided technical support for analyzing local needs and facilitated capacity building efforts, with the ultimate objective of enhancing the quality of care within each country.
- Co-authored a technical resource for the World Health Organization (WHO) aimed at improving the quality of health services in francophone countries facing fragility, conflict, and vulnerability. The resource provided valuable insights and guidelines to enhance healthcare quality in challenging francophone contexts.

UNC-AI Azhar University, Gaza, Academic Partnership for knowledge transfer and exchange

- Played a pivotal role in the development and coordination of a partnership between UNC and a university in Gaza, aimed at enhancing public health education and capacity-building among key stakeholders at academic and ministerial levels.

- Collaborated closely with UNC faculty and affiliates to design and deliver impactful public health learning initiatives to teaching staff and decision-makers in Gaza, contributing to the professional development and health knowledge enhancement of these individuals.

UNC School of Medicine, Division of Pediatrics Infectious Diseases

Supervisor: Peyton Thompson, M.D., M.S.C.R.

Aug 2019 - May 2023

- Developed the Shift in Vaccine Confidence (SVC) survey tool to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on routine vaccinations, specifically focusing on the hepatitis B vaccine, in Kinshasa, DRC. The tool was designed to gather valuable data on vaccine confidence and uptake rates in the context of the pandemic.
- Took charge of a comprehensive study to validate the construct of the SVC survey tool. Conducted 42 interviews with participants in Kinshasa, ensuring the reliability and validity of the survey instrument.
- Provided support in the initiation of a double-blinded, randomized, placebo-controlled feasibility trial aimed at simplifying hepatitis B care for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers by combining the birth-dose vaccine and prophylaxis. The trial will be carried out in Kinshasa Province, DRC. One of my key responsibilities in this project is to develop and manage the database using Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap), facilitating the collection and organization of enrollment, follow-up, exit surveys, and laboratory visit data.

UNC-Kinshasa School of Public Health Research Partnership

Supervisor: Jackie Patterson MD, MPH

Jan 2021 - May 2023

- Provided ongoing support for the development of an mHealth implementation science module, focusing on the timely introduction of hepatitis B birth-dose vaccines.
- Took a lead role in designing the course topics and formulating relevant questions that addressed the implementation of mHealth strategies for the delivery of hepatitis B birth-dose vaccines.
- Facilitated an in-person course at the prestigious Kinshasa School of Public Health (KSPH), catering to a diverse group of participants including professors and high-level students.

UNC School of Medicine, Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery

Supervisor: Gita Mody, MD, MPH

Aug 2021 - May 2022

- Led the interview, analysis, and manuscript writing for a study investigating the factors influencing patients' utilization of an electronic, web-based patient-reported outcomes (ePRO) monitoring platform. The study focused on identifying complications following thoracic surgery after patients were discharged from the hospital. Through comprehensive data collection and analysis, we aimed to gain insights into the determinants of patient engagement with the ePRO system.
- Provided valuable support in the enrollment process of the ePRO study, working closely with thoracic surgery patients in a clinical setting.

UNC School of Medicine, Lineberger Comprehensive Care Center

Supervisor: Jennifer Leeman, Dr.Ph.

Jan 2021 - Jun 2021

- Contributed insights on scaling up interventions in low-resource settings for a comprehensive literature review and co-authored a manuscript focusing on this topic. By drawing upon my expertise in low-resource settings and implementation science, I provided valuable insights into the challenges and strategies associated with scaling up interventions in resource-limited contexts.
- Led a scoping review of literature on the scaling up of innovation, collaborating with my supervisor and utilizing Covidence software. Through this systematic review process, we examined existing literature to identify key factors, barriers, and facilitators influencing the successful scaling up of innovations in both low and high-resource settings. By employing rigorous methodology and analysis, we aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of the current knowledge in this field.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, Department of Health Policy and Management

- **HPM 758** Underserved Populations **Aug 2020 - Dec 2020**
- **HPM 697** Bachelors in Public Health Capstone course **Jan 2020 - May 2020**
Lecture designed: Introduction to Implementation Science (2020 and 2021)
- **HPM 660** International Comparative Health Systems **Aug 2019 - Dec 2019**

Ad Hoc Reviewer

- 2020- Vaccine Journal
- 2020- Journal of health Administration and Education
- 2021- Sage Journal
- 2023- WHO Bulletin

NC Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace Navigator

Aug 2019 - Dec 2021

Legal Aid of North Carolina, NC Navigator Consortium

- Certified Navigator (2019-20, 2020-21) supporting individuals enroll in affordable health coverage through the ACA health insurance exchange ("Marketplace"), including completing eligibility and enrollment forms and comparing various plans.

IntraHealth International, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

May 2020 - Jul 2020

Fellow, Digital Health

- Developed a facility registry landscape analysis for use both internally and externally among the OpenHIE Facility Registry community. The analysis steered my development of a checklist of gaps identified in the current facility match service to be addressed for the next iteration of the product.
- Operationalized strategic guidance to standardize existing documentation and developed criteria for every future product developed by the IntraHealth Digital Health team.

Malaria Consortium, London, United Kingdom

Jan 2017- Jul 2018

Business Development Coordinator

- Coordinated and managed the development of proposals to traditional funders (e.g., USAID, DFID, Global Fund). Proposals focused on programming in 18 countries, including malaria, dengue, maternal and child health, disease surveillance, health systems strengthening, and neglected tropical diseases management, with project budgets ranging from \$100,000 to \$45,000,000.
- Managed relationships across the lifecycle of the bid with partners (research institutes, universities, and not-for and for-profit organizations) and the donor, maintained the relationships for potential collaborations on future proposals.
- Provided line-management support and training to a team member by setting targets and objectives, aligning daily outputs, and ensuring that his targets were being reached.
- Collaborated with different country and regional teams on program development in Africa (Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria, Mozambique, South Sudan, Sierra Leone) and South East Asia (Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Bangladesh).

FELLOWSHIPS

- The Gillings Humanitarian Health Initiative Award, 2022-2023 \$3,000
- The Gillings Humanitarian Health Initiative Award, 2021-2022 \$3,000
- Graduate Summer Research Fellowship, 2021 \$5,000
- Intrahealth Student Fellowship, 2020 \$5,000

PUBLICATIONS

- **Boisson A**, Goel V, Yotebieng M, Parr J, Fried B, Thompson P. Implementation Approaches for Introducing and Overcoming Barriers to Hepatitis B Birth Dose Vaccine in Africa. *Global Health: Science and Practice*. 2022 Feb 28;10(1):e2100277. doi: 10.9745/GHSP-D-21-00277.
- **Boisson A**, Morgan CE, Fried B, et al. Barriers and facilitators to timely birth-dose vaccines in Kinshasa Province, the DRC: a qualitative study. *Journal of Global Health Reports*. 2022 Jun;6:e2022028. doi:10.29392/001c.35449.
- Leeman J, **Boisson A**, Go V. Scaling Up Public Health Interventions: Engaging Partners Across Multiple Levels. *Annual Review of Public Health*. 2022 Nov. doi: 10.1146/annurev-publhealth-052020-113438.
- **Boisson A**, Morgan C, Stover A, Ngimbi P, Mbonze N, Ntambua S, Matondo J, Parr JB, Yotebieng M, Mwandagalirwa K, James L, Mampunza S, Thompson P. Changes in hepatitis B vaccine perception in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: Development of the Shift in Vaccine Confidence (SVC) survey tool. *Vaccine Journal*. 2023 Jan 16;41(3):623-629. doi: 10.1016/j.vaccine.2022.12.028.

- Thompson P, Parr JB, **Boisson A**, Razavi-Shearer D, Ezachi OC, Wang SU, Tucker JD. Now is the Time to Scale Up Birth Dose Hepatitis Vaccine in Low and Middle-Income Countries. *Journal of Infectious Diseases*. 2023 Jan. doi: 10.1093/infdis/jiad026.
- Leatherman S, **Boisson A**, Elorrio EG. Advancing quality in lower-resourced countries: the need for standardized and shared quality measurement and reporting. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*. 2023 Jul 13. doi: 10.1093/intqhc/mzad055.
- **Boisson A**, Fried B, Shea C, Ngimbi P, Lumande F, Tabala M, Mbonze N, Mwandagalirwa K, Babakazo P, Thompson P, Domino M, Yotebieng M. Determinants of the uptake of childhood immunization in Kinshasa Province, the DRC: ordered logit regression analyses of infant vaccines administered at birth and six-weeks of age. *BMC Global Health and Policy*. [in print]
- **Boisson A**, Lewis J, Nielson M, Leatherman S. Assessing the state of quality in lower resourced countries: the need to address data gaps to improve service delivery. *The British Medical Journal*. [in print]
- **Boisson A**, Fried B, Shea C, Ngimbi P, Lumande F, Tabala M, Mbonze N, Mwandagalirwa K, Babakazo P, Thompson P, Yotebieng M. Using intervention mapping to develop an implementation strategy to improve timely uptake of streamlined vaccines in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *BMC Global Public Health*. [in print]

TECHNICAL RESOURCES

- La qualité des soins de santé dans les zones fragiles, touchées par des conflits ou vulnérables: recueil d'outils et de ressources. World Health Organization, 2022, Authors: **Boisson A**, Nielson M, Bodson O, Kelly D. [in print]

MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

- **Boisson A**, Cox C, Shrestha S, Bright A, Carr P, Hill L, Newsome B, Long J, Haithcock B, Basch E, Stover A, Leeman J, Mody G. Barriers and facilitators to postoperative monitoring with electronic patient-reported outcome (ePRO) assessments: a qualitative study on implementation after thoracic surgery. *Journal of Patient-Reported Outcomes* [under review]
- **Boisson A**, Lantoniaina N, Tabala M, Malongo F, Kawende B, Behets F, Okitolonda E, Yotbeing M. Association between quality of care and HIV testing in HIV exposed infants. *Frontiers in Global Women's Health*. [under review]
- **Boisson A**, Morgan C, Stover A, Ngimbi P, Mbonze N, Ntambua S, Matondo J, Parr JB, Yotebieng M, Mwandagalirwa K, James L, Mampunza S, Thompson P. Changes in hepatitis B vaccine perception in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: Validating the Shift in Vaccine Confidence (SVC) survey tool. [in progress]
- **Boisson A**, Lantoniaina N, Tabala M, Malongo F, Kawende B, Behets F, Okitolonda E, Yotbeing M. Comprehensiveness of antiretroviral care reduces the prevalence of HIV detectable viral load among pregnant and postpartum women: findings from a cross-sectional study. [in progress]
- Morgan C, Ngimbi P, **Boisson-Walsh A**, Yotebieng M, Parr J, Thompson P. Household transmission of hepatitis B virus in urban Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. [in progress]

SELECT SKILLS

- Computer Skills: STATA Statistical software, Microsoft Office suite, RedCAP, Qualtrics survey, Dedoose, MaxQDA, Covidence, R Studio, SAS, Mendeley, Endnote, Adobe Pro Acrobat
- Language capacities: Native: English, Fluent: French, Proficient: Spanish
- Analytic capability, particularly summarizing complex information
- Leadership chairing and managing workshops, large meetings and conference calls across multiple geographic time zones
- Strong organizational and time management skills, including ability to simultaneously edit and package multiple sections of proposals under tight deadlines
- Certified yoga instructor [200 hour]

REFERENCES

Available upon request.