

IMPROVING ACCESS TO IMMUNISATION

HOW THE GAVI ALLIANCE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

As we approach the 2015 deadline, the world has made enormous progress, almost halving the number of under-five deaths since 1990. However, around 6.6 million children under the age of five still tragically die every year, mostly from preventable causes and treatable diseases.

One of the most effective health tools we have at our disposal is immunisation. Every child, regardless of where they are born, should enjoy the full benefits of immunisation and other health services as part of their right to health. Immunisation not only saves lives and prevents children from getting sick, it is also recognised as one of the most cost-effective health investments in history.

Improved coverage of childhood immunisation produces major economic benefits for both families and governments. Immunised children also have higher cognitive abilities and are more likely to attend school and become productive and healthy adults.

1 in 5 children do not have access to life-saving vaccines

Vaccines already save between two to three million lives each year, yet 22.6 million children remain unimmunised with the basic vaccines. In other terms, nearly 1 in 5 of all children who die before the age of five lose their lives to vaccine-preventable causes. We have the tools to end preventable child deaths but unwavering political support is imperative to reach those targets.

Why invest in the GAVI Alliance?

The GAVI Alliance, a public private partnership formed in 2000, helps to ensure that more children can access the vaccines they need to stay healthy. As an alliance of national governments, donors, the private sector, civil society and technical health partners, GAVI is able to capitalise on the sum of its partners' comparative advantages. GAVI has supported the immunisation of 440 million children and averted 6 million deaths since 2000. GAVI works actively to shape vaccine markets and accelerates the uptake and use of underused and new vaccines in more than 70 of the world's poorest countries.

How do we reach the 5th child?

GAVI was established with the mandate of addressing inequities in access to immunisation worldwide. While tremendous progress has been made in reducing inequalities between low- and high-income countries when it comes to access to immunisation, huge sub-national inequalities still remain. With sufficient financial support and a smart shift in GAVI's strategy the final fifth is within our reach.



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EQUITABLE ACCESS: SHIFTING FROM COUNTRIES TO INDIVIDUALS

Despite incredible progress in increasing immunisation coverage of basic and new vaccines globally, many children – often from the poorest families, the most remote areas and marginalised group – are still missing out. High-level commitment and investment to reduce inequities between countries must be matched with equal efforts to reduce inequalities within countries. Reaching those hard-to-reach children remains a critical challenge and doing so will require strategic shifts and additional resources. As part of this effort, a reflection around the relevance of GAVI eligibility and graduation criteria vis-à-vis the current immunisation

landscape is needed, given the changing nature of poverty and rising inequity in middle-income countries. Indeed, a number of countries will graduate from GAVI's support based on their income status including countries with huge gaps in immunisation coverage. The role of civil society will be equally important in advancing the equity agenda. Civil society organisations play a critical role in the provision of health services, in identifying community needs, in addressing gaps for equitable access, and in holding all stakeholders accountable. Strong, empowered communities are a GAVI ally. As such, civil society should be meaningfully engaged in defining the future of immunisation and the GAVI Alliance, including within its governance structures.

STRENGTHENING HEALTH SYSTEMS

More needs to be done to strengthen health systems within which immunisation systems operate to ensure long-term and sustainable impact. Strengthening routine immunisation depends upon all of the core building blocks of a well-functioning health system: efficient supply chain, infrastructure, enough qualified and properly incentivised health workers etc. Inequity of access in vaccine delivery reflects inequity of access to all health services. Investments in immunisation must be well targeted but should also take into account the broader costs of delivery through health systems, not just the purchase of vaccines.

INCREASING COMPETITION AND DRIVING PRICES DOWN

In the last decade the introduction of new vaccines into immunisation schedules meant that children were protected from more diseases. However, even with GAVI's work to secure access to much reduced vaccine prices, the cost to fully immunise a child has increased 25-fold during that same period. A healthy vaccines market with sufficient and genuine competition is needed to drive vaccines' prices down. GAVI has a catalytic role to play in the broader vaccine market: sustainable access to affordable prices is necessary for countries to maintain coverage, especially when they graduate from GAVI support and access to GAVI-negotiated prices. Improving the level of technology transfer to emerging country manufacturers, increasing the number of manufacturers to the market, creating pooled procurement mechanisms for middle-income countries and diversifying the supplier bases are all effective steps to spur innovation, ensure sustainable access to lower prices and adequate delivery.

ENSURING A FULLY-FUNDED MECHANISM

European Union development priorities will only be met with sufficient investment and political leadership towards immunisation and child health. However, current financial and political commitments are relatively low when set against the backdrop of ambitious EU policy priorities. The EU institutions contribution represents only 0.7% of GAVI funding, much below its status as the 3rd largest contributor to international development globally.

WE CALL ON THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS & ACP GROUP OF STATES TO :

SUPPORT

the GAVI Alliance in the context of the ongoing programming exercise by scaling up their contributions via the DCI and the EDF to €50 million per year for 2015-2019

ENSURE

that GAVI alliance makes equity a top priority in its next strategy and business plan

ENSURE

that immunisation is featured in the post 2015 development agenda

