

DFID's support for vaccination

Help ensure the UK continues to support Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) is one of the world's most effective anti-poverty institutions, spending the bulk of the UK's overseas aid budget with a firm focus on poverty reduction. . The UK's support for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance is a great example – since it was founded 20 years ago, Gavi has helped immunise more than 760 million children and prevented over 13 million deaths. During Gavi's last replenishment in 2015, the UK contributed a direct pledge of £1.1 billion, which helped make it Gavi's largest donor, enabling Gavi to reach millions of children around the world with life-saving vaccines. Without past and current UK support, the remarkable achievements the world has made in immunisation would not have been possible.

It is vital for Gavi to be fully replenished in 2020 to continue its work toward global vaccination targets. In the period 2021–2025, Gavi plans to help the world's poorest countries reach a further 300 million children and save an additional 7–8 million lives. To achieve its ambitious plans, Gavi will need at least an extra US \$7.4 billion. On 3-4 June 2020, the UK will host Gavi's next replenishment conference, and it must ensure an ambitious replenishment to make progress towards enabling children to receive all essential vaccines. We are asking for the UK government to pledge at least 25% of Gavi's financial request (at current exchange rates, around £1.65 billion) for the period 2021-2025. This month, please arrange to visit or write to your MP, explaining why you support the work of DFID to overcome poverty. Please ask your MP to write to Secretary of State for International Development Alok Sharma, asking him to continue the UK's strong support for Gavi's life-saving vaccination programmes.

UK support for global vaccination

The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) is one of the world's most effective anti-poverty institutions, spending the bulk of the UK's overseas aid budget with a firm focus on poverty reduction. An excellent example is the UK's support to [Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance](#), which since 2000 has helped immunise more than 760 million children and has prevented more than 13 million deaths.

Britain's impact in the world

As the deadline for Brexit approaches, and with ongoing controversies around how the UK spends its resources domestically and overseas, the Government is seeking to show how Britain will maintain its standing in the world and develop new trade deals. Against this background, in the recent Queen's Speech, it announced a review of the UK's foreign policy, including how it uses its international development budget, currently around £14.6 billion.

During the election, all the major parties recommitted themselves to retaining the target of spending 0.7% of the national income on overseas aid. However, some senior politicians and sections of the media remain hostile or sceptical, and around Christmas time,

[rumours were circulated in the press](#) that the Government is considering merging the Department for International Development (DFID) with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). At the time of writing, it is not clear whether these plans will go ahead.

According to the latest [DFID Annual Report](#), between January 2015 and December 2017, UK aid supported the immunisation of over 56 million children, saving 990,000 lives. It also reached over 60 million children under 5, women of childbearing age and adolescent girls with nutrition programmes and supported over 14 million people to gain a decent education between April 2015 and March 2019.

It is vital that UK aid is delivered effectively and transparently, which can only be done by retaining DFID as an independent government department with oversight of all UK aid spending; by ensuring that international development is represented at Ministerial level in Cabinet; that all UK aid spending reaches the high level of quality and transparency of DFID itself; and that DFID retains the technical expertise that marks it out as a world-leading development agency. Australia and Canada have recently experienced mergers of their Foreign Policy and Development departments, [and evidence suggests this has not been beneficial](#), with

fears that development priorities have been superseded by diplomatic, defence and trading interests.

An example of DFID's impact: Supporting Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

During Gavi's last financial replenishment in 2015, the UK contributed a direct pledge of £1.1 billion, which made it Gavi's largest individual donor. Without past and current UK support, the remarkable achievements the world has made in immunisation would not have been possible.

Immunisation saves 2-3 million lives each year and plays a crucial role in poverty reduction. It is one of the most cost-effective health interventions, with every [\\$1 invested yielding up to \\$54 in return](#) in Gavi-supported countries. Vaccines don't just save lives: they also have a huge impact on families, communities and economies. Immunisation services are often central to a country's health system, as well as providing immediate protection from diseases. Children who are vaccinated get less sick, less often, attend school more and have better employment prospects.

Continued support for Gavi is vital

It is vital that Gavi is fully replenished in 2020 to continue its work toward achieving global vaccination targets. In its [investment case](#), Gavi asks international donors for renewed commitment to help countries continue to prevent disease, protect their communities and prosper. In the period 2021–2025, Gavi plans to reach a further 300 million children, and save an additional 7–8 million lives. Gavi also plans to expand the number of vaccines it delivers and to continue to create fair markets that enable lifesaving vaccines to be delivered to the world's poorest countries. To achieve

these ambitious plans, Gavi will need at least US \$7.4 billion in additional resources.

On 3-4 June 2020, the UK will host Gavi's next replenishment conference. As conference host, the UK must ensure an ambitious replenishment to make progress towards enabling children to receive life-saving vaccines. [This year is the critical time](#) for the UK Government to make an ambitious financial commitment to Gavi. We are asking for the UK Government to commit at least 25% of Gavi's financial ask of \$7.4 billion (which at current exchange rates is approximately £1.65 billion).

We know that DFID staff are strongly supportive of Gavi's work and are planning for a successful replenishment conference; however, political support is essential for a successful replenishment, as the significant sums involved make it a cross-departmental issue, with sign off required from the Treasury.

What can I do now?

If you were able to write to DFID Permanent Secretary Matthew Rycroft on Gavi replenishment in November, thank you!

This month, please arrange to visit or write to your MP, explaining why you support the work of DFID to overcome poverty. If you have recently visited your MP, you may wish to follow up your visit with a letter, explaining why you support the work of DFID, and why it is important to retain DFID as an independent department. Please also explain why, right now, it is vital for DFID to continue to support Gavi financially. Please ask your MP to write to Secretary of State for International Development Rt. Hon. Alok Sharma MP, asking him to continue the UK's essential support for Gavi's life-saving vaccination programmes.

Take action!

1. Please write to or visit your MP, explaining your support for the work of an independent DFID, and in particular, its financial support for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. Please ask your MP to write to the Secretary of State, Rt. Hon. Alok Sharma MP, asking him to ensure the UK commits at least 25% of the funding for Gavi in 2020.

You can find the details of your MP at www.theyworkforyou.com or <https://members.parliament.uk/> and you may want to check out December's [guidance](#) on preparing for a meeting with your MP.

2. Why not join other advocates at a lobby of Parliament on 12 February? Together with the ONE Campaign, we are co-organising an event in Westminster, where you can arrange to meet your MP alongside other campaigners! Let us know if you are interested in coming – we can help fund your travel to London.

Please let us know that you've taken action by emailing Dela at delanderson@results.org.uk.